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—Reviews—

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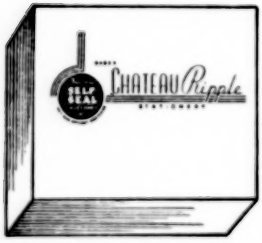

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

GILBERT BAGNANI, a distinguished Italian archæologist and historian, now resident in Canada, has written of *Rome and the Papacy* and *The Roman Campagna and its Treasures*.

L. J. BONDY, Professor of French in St. Michael's College, is the author of *Le Classicisme de Brunetière* (1930).

ROY DANIELLS is Professor of English in the University of Manitoba.

N. J. ENDICOTT, a graduate of the University and of Oxford, is Associate Professor of English in University College.

J. E. HODGETTS is a Lecturer in Political Science in the University.

JOHN A. IRVING, a graduate of the University and of Cambridge, and Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in the University of British Columbia, was invited, as a distinguished former student, to contribute the memorial article on Dean Brett. He has since been appointed to the chair of Ethics in Victoria College.

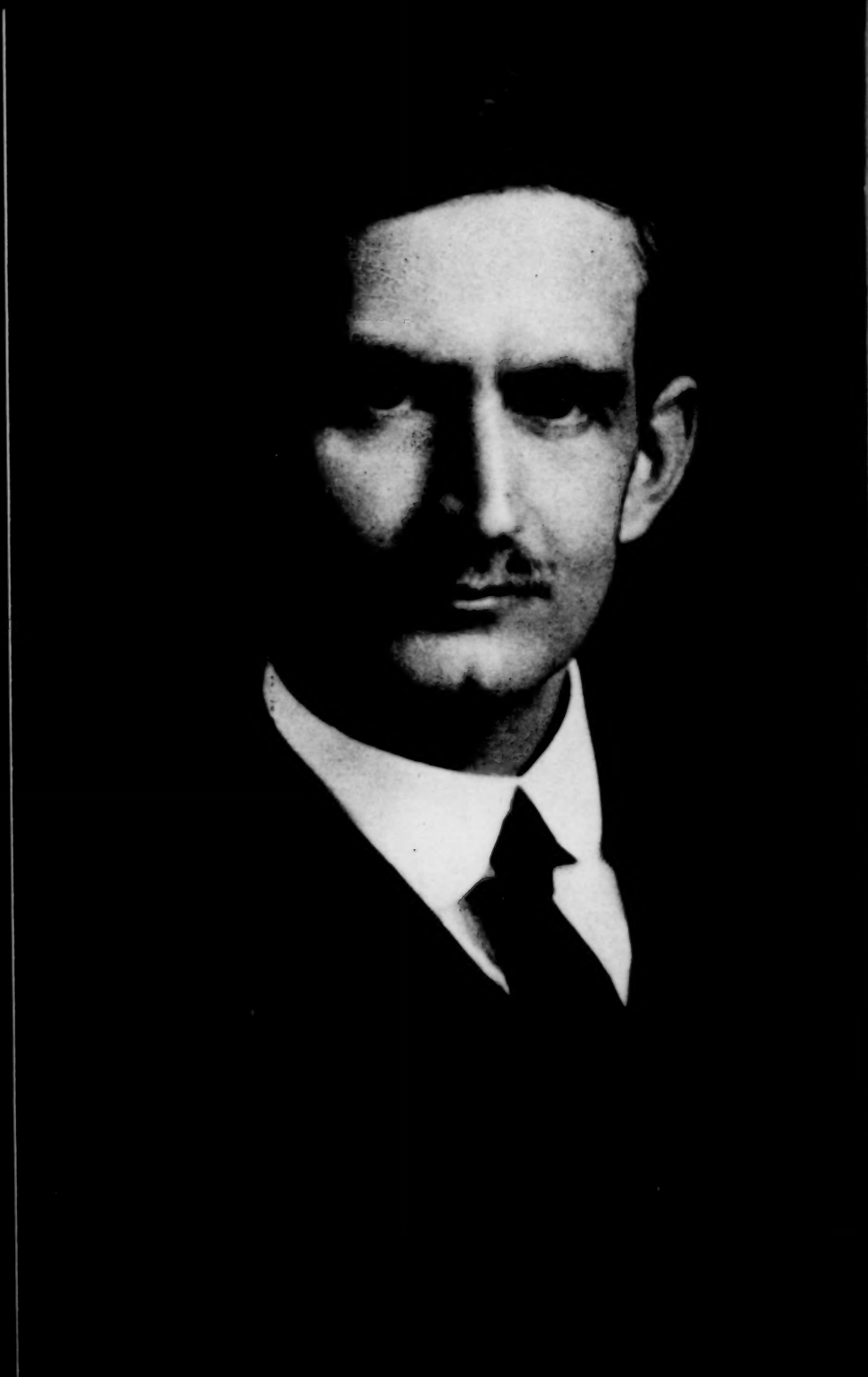
EDGAR McINNIS, Associate Professor of History in the University, is the author of *The Unguarded Frontier* (1942) and the *Oxford Periodical History of the War*.

KENNETH MACLEAN is Associate Professor of English in Victoria College.

WILLIAM ROBBINS has recently joined the English Department in the University of British Columbia.

CARLETON STANLEY, one of Canada's leading humanists, and until recently President of Dalhousie University, is a graduate of Toronto and Oxford. He is the author of *The Roots of the Tree* (1936), a group of essays on classical subjects, and *Matthew Arnold*, the Alexander Lectures in University College for 1938.

LIONEL STEVENSON, Professor of English in the University of Southern California, has published *Appraisals of Canadian Literature* (1926) and *Darwin among the Poets* (1932), and, more recently, biographical studies of Lady Morgan and Charles Lever.



THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GEORGE SIDNEY BRETT
(1879-1944)

JOHN A. IRVING

WITH the death of George Sidney Brett in Toronto on October 27, 1944, the world lost its greatest historian of psychology, and Canada its most distinguished philosopher.

I

He was born in Briton Ferry, a seaport of Glamorganshire, South Wales, on August 5, 1879, of English parents, George J. and Emmeline Brett. His father was a Methodist minister whose birthplace was Canterbury, in 1849. After training at Didsbury College, the elder Brett was appointed in 1873 to his first circuit. On the occasion of his death in 1915, after forty-two years in the ministry, he was described in the minutes of the Wesleyan Conference of England as a man whose personal life was characterized by sincere piety and humility and an absorbing devotion to duty: "He had a high ideal of the Christian ministry, and was loved as a cultured, Christian gentleman. In business he was methodical and exact, cautious and tactful, a capable and strong administrator, giving that strict attention to detail which only a man engrossed in his work could give, and with a fund of quiet, genial humour that smoothed away many difficulties. To partake of the Lord's Supper with him was a benediction. His sermons were thoughtful and incisive, and were born of a rich and ripe experience." Many of these expressions might, with propriety, be used to describe his eminent son.

George Sidney Brett was one of the most impersonal of men; no one could have had a greater regard than he for personal privacy. There is little on public record or floating in tradition regarding his youth. Without being secretive, he rarely dipped into his personal past, and only then to illustrate some impersonal point. From 1890 to 1898 he attended Kingswood, the great Methodist preparatory school founded by John Wesley at Bath. The fare at this school is wholesome, the discipline very rigid, and the learning of the highest quality. Brett was an extra-year scholarship holder (six years only being allowed on the foundation as of right) in 1896; in that year he also won the Bunting Medal, awarded to the Head Boy of the school, and his name is accordingly inscribed on the walls of Kingswood. In 1897 he was awarded the Farmer Prize for an English Essay, and in 1898 the Meek Medal for proficiency in Greek Testament. During his final year he was both Senior Prefect and President of the Senior Literary Society. Before leaving the school he also won a medal for an open all-England essay in political science.

At Kingswood it was only fitting that Brett (who became and remained throughout his life one of the most loyal sons and advocates Oxford ever

had) should have come under the influence chiefly of two Cambridge men, W. P. Workman and F. Richards. Workman, the Headmaster, was a brilliant mathematician and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Brett's interest in science was developed and strengthened by his courses in physics and statistical method. Between 1890 and 1900 Workman was very much excited about geology and began a collection of specimens at the school (the Bath district is peculiarly suitable for geological collections) which has gone on ever since. Several well-known men, such as Professor Raw, Professor Swinnerton, and F. A. Potts of Trinity Hall, made early contributions and the collection is now first rate. This enterprise interested Brett immensely, and he referred to it with more feeling than was his custom when he discussed the modern transformation of geological science in his lectures on nineteenth-century thought. His enthusiasm for science and the history of science may be traced directly to the period at Kingswood.

While still at school Brett had some thought of taking up medicine as a profession. This early interest in medicine never abated, and many years later, in Toronto, he became a lay member of a Medical Historical Club. One of his published papers, originally delivered before a Stated Meeting of an Academy of Medicine, dealt with Francis Gall and the condition of medicine at the end of the eighteenth century. At the request of the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Toronto he gave, during 1924-5, a special series of lectures on the relation of science to civilization. Not long before his fatal illness he was invited to prepare a course on the history of thought in its scientific aspects for the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering. After the death of the distinguished anatomist, J. Playfair McMurrich, some years ago, Brett edited (with the exception of the modern portion) his posthumous *History of Anatomy*. These activities, as well as many publications, show how great an influence he exerted in establishing fruitful relationships between the history of science and the history of philosophy.

Richards, the Second Master at Kingswood, to whom many generations of boys owed their scholarship, had taken the Classical Tripos at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1882. He was the author of a line-for-line translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, a man of strict and exact learning and of real enthusiasms, especially in Greek and English letters. Richards seems to have been more influential than Workman in that his pupil finally turned definitely to classical rather than scientific studies. At the age of seventeen, Brett won a scholarship in classics for Oxford. Both his school and the University, eschewing precociousness, regarded this award merely as a preliminary test. He took more advanced and individual work for another year, won an Open Exhibition in Classics at Christ Church, and went up in 1898. The foundations of the vast scholarship of his later years had already been firmly established. He was well grounded not only in his speciality, the classics, but also in science, mathematics, and political economy. Most important of all, through numerous and vigorous discussions in the many groups which existed in his school, he had learned to think independently in these diversified fields.

At Oxford, Brett read for two years in the School of Classical Moderations and two years in the School of Literae Humaniores; he was placed in the Second Class in the former in 1900 and in the First Class in the latter in 1902. He attributed his showing in "Mods" to the examiners' emphasis on linguistics rather than literature; in "Greats" he found at last in philosophy a field which challenged his severely disciplined and synthetic mind for the rest of his life. In the study of philosophy he developed an extraordinary memory for logical content, an unusual power of selection of materials, and a fine feeling for the order and continuity of history and tradition. There is a legend that in the Greats examination, on the ancient history paper, he was faced with a question that required a knowledge of the widely different policies pursued by the two sons of an emperor. Without mentioning the names of the sons (which he had forgotten completely) he contrived to answer the question so brilliantly that he received a high First Class on the paper. In a curious sense, he was absent-minded with respect to detail, but what impressed students at Toronto in later years was already apparent at Oxford—his grasp of the large perspectives, the far-flung inter-relations, the vast unity of history.

At the beginning of this century it was generally admitted that Greats was the premier school at Oxford, though it was beginning to share that honour with Modern History, and there were demands which later crystallized into "Modern Greats." The strength of Greats consists in the training it gives in the fundamental features of the Greek and Roman civilizations from which so much of our modern culture has sprung. A long succession of very fine minds has been trained in this School, not only in the profession of scholarship, but also in the public service. Its two great weaknesses are an almost complete neglect of modern science and its concentration on the ancient period. Owing to the influence of Kingswood and his wide independent reading, Brett never suffered from either of these limitations.

Oxford influences its students (so far as formal teaching is concerned) much more through the weekly sessions with the tutors who control their studies than through the professors whose lectures they attend. To write one essay a week, go to the tutor's room, read it aloud to him as he puffs at his pipe, then hear him tear it to pieces and reconstruct it, is certainly the most creative experience in the intellectual field that an undergraduate can have—provided that he has a superb tutor. In Brett's time, Christ Church had two such tutors: John Alexander Stewart in classics, and Herbert W. Blunt in philosophy. Stewart, who later became White's Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University, was the author of a massive two-volume commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* as well as a masterpiece entitled *The Myths of Plato*. It is clear from the introduction to another work on Plato's doctrine of ideas that Stewart realized keenly the importance of psychology, for he wrote: "We may confidently expect that the employment of this intimate method [i.e., the psychological] of interpretation upon work so genial, so charged with rich

personality, as is Plato's, will discover there treasures of truth and beauty hitherto hidden." Blunt, who contributed many witty and learned reviews, mainly of German philosophical books, to *Mind* between 1888 and 1915, was Brett's principal teacher of philosophy.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Oxford shared the general sense of security in onward progress by evolutionary processes. The gradual growth of economic as well as political democracy was taken for granted. One of the few disturbances, or rufflings of the surface, during Brett's undergraduate days, came through Sir Halford Mackinder's lectures in which he was (all unknown to most of the world) laying the foundations of geopolitics. But, apart from such incidents which thrilled the students momentarily, the sense of stable onward movement pervaded the philosophy of the time. It is not too unkind to say that in those days most philosophers in most universities were more preoccupied with defending their own settled views, as against some counter-orthodoxy, than in exploring new possibilities of truth. It was fortunate indeed that Herbert Blunt had his head above this narrow practice of the professorial calling. For Brett, with his special qualities of intense intellectual concentration and almost obstinately individualist will-power, might well have developed — unless in steady contact with a better equipped mind than his own, and one with some sturdiness—into, if not exactly an eccentric thinker, at least one who was in danger of driving down too lonely a road, or possibly up a dead end. He recognized to the full his great debt to Blunt and often referred most appreciatively to him in after years. Apart from Stewart and Blunt, the other men who influenced Brett at Oxford seem to have been chiefly: Thomas Case, President of Corpus Christi College and Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy; Edward Burnett Tylor, one of the founders of modern anthropology; and John Linton Myres, the eminent classical archaeologist. It is not without significance that both Tylor and Myres have constantly emphasized in their numerous publications the importance of the scientific approach in our attempt to understand historical and cultural phenomena.

Brett maintained his interest in and his connection with Methodism during his undergraduate years. The Reverend William Bradfield, B.A., was then Superintendent of the Oxford district of the Methodist Church with a special responsibility in relation to students. Bradfield was a man with a vigorous, incisive mind, and above the ministerial average in scholarship, an evangelical Christian who nevertheless was not shocked at any undergraduate heresies. At the Wesley Society which he conducted, papers on religious topics, read by distinguished visitors, Oxford dons, and students, were discussed, and in these papers and their discussion Brett took a lively interest. One aspect of English Methodism may throw light on his later adherence to the Church of England in Canada. Methodism was, so to speak, cold-shouldered out of the Anglican Church; it did not spring up in England as a definitely "Nonconformist" denomination. For this reason many Anglican features persist in English Methodism; for

example, at Wesley Memorial Church in Oxford (the student church for Methodists) the morning service is almost indistinguishable from an Anglican morning service. Many English Methodists maintain that they are nearer to Anglicanism than to Nonconformists like the Baptists. Brett was of this persuasion. At the Wesley Society he used to come into lively collision on this issue with another immensely brilliant scholar, Ernest Genner, who was a grimly dogmatic Puritan Nonconformist. One of these debates between Brett and Genner was set off by the visit to Oxford of the famous witty divine, W. L. Watkinson, who took the semi-Anglican position. When Brett came to Canada he felt that the Canadian Anglicans were more akin to the English Methodists than were the Canadian Methodists, and he accordingly became an Anglican. Throughout his life he believed very definitely in the necessity of the Christian Church as one of the great institutions of society. His interest in religion found expression in Canada also in his relationship with the *Canadian Journal of Religious Thought* and in a number of published papers on various aspects of theology.

Early in 1904 Brett entered the Indian Educational Service as Professor of Philosophy in Government College, Lahore, the Punjab. The interval on going down from Oxford had been spent teaching at schools in London and Cambridge, working on a new edition of one of the big dictionaries, and translating German books for Macmillans. The influence of some four years in India teaching philosophy and English was deep and lasting. Extending an already wide knowledge of languages, he learned to speak Hindustani and acquired a knowledge of Sanscrit and Arabic. He threw himself wholeheartedly into the varied interests of the college and the students and was honorary librarian,[1] first editor of the *Ravi* (a college magazine), president of a dramatic club which produced Shakespeare's plays, president of the literary club, coach of the football team for three years, and founder of a philosophical debating club which now bears his name (some twenty years later a similar club was established on his initiative in Toronto and he was its honorary president). Nor were his interests confined to academic life; they included work of an administrative nature

[1]Shortly before leaving India, he received from the Assistant Librarian the following letter (the sentiments of which might have been expressed by many students at Toronto):

Dear Sir,/I humbly beg to approach you with the following:—/Words cannot adequately convey my deep sense of appreciation of that kind control of yours under which I have had the opportunity of working for the organization of the Punjab University Library. When I first joined this post last year I found myself weak in the performance of my duties but your useful directions made my way as smooth as possible and have placed me under an obligation which I cannot forget during my whole life. Your gentle and kind behaviour, sense of duty, straightforwardness, unrivalled ability, powerful discretion, have all been the cause of endearing you to me. Now, as you are going to leave India, I respectfully beg to assure you, Sir, that I shall feel your loss very keenly./I pray the Almighty that you may have a very pleasant time at home and a richly deserved healthful rest, and that you may long be spared to continue to work for the benefit of your brethren and society at large./I am, Sir,/Your Most Obedient Servant,/MUNAND LAL,/Assistant Librarian.

for the Punjab Department of Education, a keen enjoyment of the social environment, membership in a cavalry unit, and strenuous athletic activity.

Most significantly of all, this experience in India gave him new material for comparative analysis from another wide field of philosophical thought, set in its natural environment. His mind was too logical and too steeped in the Greek tradition to be overwhelmed by the halo of romance and the mysticism and nihilism of the East, but the vast variety and philosophical comprehensiveness, as well as the penetrating dialectic, of Indian thought left a permanent impression. A mind capable of the discovery could even find, among the rich and colourful panorama of Indian ideas, premises that constitute the essence of idealism, realism, or pragmatism. Popularly, of course, Indian philosophy bears a superficial appearance of negation, and this conception is encouraged by the cult of fakirs and "illusion" (maya). For Brett, Indian philosophy was predominately a form of moral asceticism which could make a constructive contribution to the moral thought of the West. He wrote in 1934:

> As is the case always, when we can recover the necessary evidence, human thought begins with practices that lead to desired ends. As the Jains say, the main test of true knowledge is that it helps us to attain our purpose. Everything then depends on the purpose; and this is always for all men the essence of the question: "What shall we do to be saved?" It is not true that the West ignores this question; far from it! But in comparison with the East we seem to move in a restricted area and to be submerged in hasty limitations: we understand political schemes and economic plans; in our more enlightened moments we admit the fundamental importance of character, realize the need for more morality rather than more legislation, or discuss peace when we fear annihilation. But the depth of our convictions can be measured by the unfamiliarity of the terms which dominate Indian philosophy, "liberation" (moksa), "sainthood" (jivan-mukhti), "the principle of non-injury" (ahimsā), and the like. Of course we have these ideas in our literature, for Christianity has brought down to us the concepts which antedated its ecclesiastical dogmas or political entanglements; but then the "failure of Christianity" is one of the phrases which are too true to be good.[2]

In a number of published papers Brett has discussed the fascinating problem of the debt of western civilization to India in early times. About 1840 a theory had been put forward which maintained that the Greeks owed nearly everything to India. His estimate of this view is especially significant in the light of his profound knowledge of both civilizations. He believed that the historical facts and parallelisms are more easily explained by going back to common sources in Babylonia and Egypt. The actual oriental influences which have persisted through the development of western thought first become apparent in the Graeco-Roman world in the time of Alexander, who succeeded in mixing the eastern and western civilizations rather thoroughly. Between the fall of the Roman empire and the end of the eighteenth century there is an almost complete gap in the history of the literary relations between India and the West. In modern times, Hegel was the first philosopher explicitly to recognize that the East is an integral part of the history of human culture.

Although Brett discounted the earlier theory of the debt of the West to

[2] *International Journal of Ethics*, XLV, 1934, 104.

India, he had, nevertheless, both a deep belief in the power of India to achieve, ultimately, a paramount position in the world, and a just admiration for the qualities of mind of the Indian whether in scholarship or statesmanship. The real enemies of India were partisan agitators, undoubtedly clever, but cunning and crafty in their methods and without any true capacity to solve their country's political and religious difficulties. The key to a settlement might possibly be provided by the native princes, but there was no immediate prospect of India's complete independence outside the British Commonwealth. To the end of his life he kept himself an informed authority on India by reading a vast number of books and government documents. His own lectures and publications unquestionably did much to promote in Canada a saner and more tolerant attitude towards the British and Indian leaders and the well-nigh insoluble problems with which they are confronted. There was also the constant insistence that a more active sympathy with Indian thought and ideals should be developed in Canada, as well as other British countries, by the provision of facilities in our universities for the study of the intellectual life of British India and the Indian states.

Brett had just completed his book on the *Philosophy of Gassendi* and was already working on his *History of Psychology* when, at the age of twenty-nine, he came from India in September, 1908, to Trinity College in the University of Toronto, as Lecturer in Classics and Librarian. He was appointed Professor of Ethics and Ancient Philosophy the following year, and continued his connection with Trinity until 1921. He soon became known as a very stimulating teacher who was contributing much to the intellectual life of the college. During this period he made a new catalogue for the library, extended its usefulness in other ways, and as chairman of the Common Room Committee reorganized the Senior Common Room (which had not been used for some years previously) so effectively that it has played a large part in the life of the college ever since.

Shortly after coming to Trinity he also began lecturing in the University. He was an Assistant in the Department of Philosophy and Psychology from 1909 to 1911; a Lecturer in Greek Philosophy from 1911 to 1916; a part-time Professor from 1916 to 1921, and full-time Professor in 1921. He was made Acting Head of the Department of Philosophy in 1926, Head in 1927, and Professor of Ethics in University College in 1932. Two summers were spent as Visiting Professor of Philosophy, at the University of Michigan in 1927, and the University of British Columbia in 1942. The persistent tradition among Toronto students that he declined not only professorships of philosophy in other institutions but also attractive offers of principalships and presidencies of various schools and universities both in Canada and the United States has a solid foundation in fact. He was first and last a university man too keenly devoted to study and teaching to leave these fields for high administrative positions or any increments however great.

The Toronto Department of Philosophy was already well organized in

1908. Its members included J. G. Hume, A. Kirschman, G. J. Blewett (whose tragic death in 1913 was an irreparable loss), F. Tracy, A. H. Abbott, W. G. Smith, and T. R. Robinson. Nearly thirty pass and honours courses were being offered in the various fields of the history of philosophy, psychology, logic, metaphysics, and ethics. The undergraduate curriculum in philosophy and psychology, with its programme of lectures and reading of classical texts, was the equal of any other in North America at that time. In this strong department, Brett combined in peerless teaching the profoundest historical knowledge and the most acute logical acumen with an extraordinary constructive imagination. He reformulated his courses every year (a guiding principle which prevented staleness), added new ones, and expanded others on the basis of recent reading. The practice also of teaching courses which would enable him to revive matters with which he was losing touch led him, for example, to re-read Spinoza two years ago and offer a half-course in the third year in order to expound the *Ethics*.

Students usually became acquainted with him through his course of lectures on Ancient Philosophy. Their first impression was of a quiet, unobtrusive man who infinitely preferred the calm necessary for true philosophical activity to any publicity or fanfare. They realized immediately the breadth of his scholarship. There was nothing he did not seem to know: no important work, ancient or modern, on the philosophy and psychology of the Graeco-Roman period seemed to have escaped his scrutiny and logical analysis. His interpretation of the philosophical problems raised during the course was consistently clear and capable of being grasped even by those who had not studied the subject except in its most elementary aspects. Perhaps one of his most outstanding characteristics was the impartiality with which he approached the many unsolved problems of philosophy. No tendency to take sides in the ideological differences that often characterizes philosophical discussions, no wish to indoctrinate in this or that conceptual scheme ever crept into his lectures. His students felt that they were obtaining an account of Greek thought and feeling as adequate as they could ever hope to have.

He represented not merely an erudite exponent of the *Republic* of Plato and the *Ethics* of Aristotle, not merely a man of impressive learning; in his personality there was something of the Greek temperament, the Greek *ethos*. On his lips the words of the ancients quickened with new meaning and vitality, and beneath the ordered approach to the subject pulsated a warm and sympathetic spirit. One remembers many absorbing discussions on the Greek view of government, education, morality, and art. Like Socrates he delighted in drawing from his students opposing and contradictory viewpoints, not to expose their ignorance, but to open up new worlds of thought and so to stimulate the inquiring mind to a more unprejudiced search for truth. One also detected in his flair for "dialectical method" something of the Greek ideal of order and harmony. Perhaps his lectures had much in common with the serene dignity and limpid rationality that prevailed in Plato's Academy. Like Socrates also, he knew only too well

that all we do know is nothing compared to what we do not know, and that truth ultimately remains a continuous conquest, an eternal search.

In unusual degree Brett's instruction combined austerity and rigour in his demands on his students and patience and industry in meeting their shortcomings and ignorance. He was not appalled by their frequent confusion, and their immature questions were interpreted as signs of a stirring toward light. If his concern for the immediacy and objective importance of what he taught led him sometimes to fail to detect the bluffer or made him neglect the lazy, his method was life-giving to those who wished to understand and who could not readily confine their studies to the preparation of material to be retailed on examinations. He would not merely answer a student's question but illuminate the whole background of experience which had given rise to it; and he had sufficient sense of the stern reality of clear ideas to be more than tolerant of the struggle to achieve them.

Because he moved so steadily in a realm of clear thinking and subtle appreciations he knew that the only kind of knowledge or education worth having came from submission on the part of his students to a rigorous and objective quest. He would not tolerate platitudes and his method was paralysingly analytic at times. His lectures were essentially critical experiences from which only sheer indifference or laziness could save one. If students were sometimes left bewildered, this was no fault of his method. Their bewilderment arose from the poverty or narrowness of Canadian aesthetic or cultural life; they were too little sensitive to the realities behind the words in which they trusted. Yet even the completely confused among them could realize that their lack of basic appreciations did not distress their teacher. A good illustration of what he demanded of his students is shown in the patience with which he would point out errors in composition in philosophical essays. He knew all too well that clarity of thought does not prevail apart from its exhibition, and the student must struggle to the last comma to achieve it. He would sometimes not answer questions directly but would force the student to further thinking, and even treat lightly the antitheses of past and earnest men. On one occasion, after he had been reviewing Green's controversy with the Utilitarians, a hopeful student asked him his opinion of the merits of Green's criticism. He smiled and told the story of the theological student who when asked to discuss the major and minor prophets in an examination and finding himself in complete darkness wrote, "Far be it from me to distinguish between these holy men." Certain other professors seemed to work within accepted limits. Brett by historical reference, or the seemingly irrelevant, presented material which not only transformed the formal problem but convinced his students of the reality of its issues.

His students will certainly remember him for the brilliance and clarity of his exposition of the history of philosophy; many of them will longer remember his friendly, sympathetic encouragement of their own attempts at scholarship. Prefaces, articles, and theses testify to the time and energy he devoted to the manuscripts of others, while publishers despaired of

receiving new manuscripts from him or further revisions of his published works. It has been said truly that not the least of his pleasures was to see those who had come to learn from him attain scholastic maturity of their own. Gardner Murphy (immediate Past President of the American Psychological Association and author of *An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology*) has written eloquently for all of these:

> Seldom have I encountered such generosity of intellectual fellowship as was expressed in Brett's helpfulness to me when I was working in the field of the history of psychology. Despite the signal service rendered to psychology by his own work, I was even more moved by the spirit with which he responded to my appeal for a critical and friendly reading of my own manuscript. He saw its shortcomings and its immaturities, and he helped me hugely and sympathetically. He shared with me the depth of his own response to the timeless figures who have given us the classical psychology, and wanted to help others to share their immortal insights into human nature.

Nothing intrigued Brett's students more than the secret of his own position in epistemology and metaphysics. Blunt had told him not to be in a hurry in working out a philosophical system, and he seems to have followed that advice almost to the end of his life. Shortly before his death he had begun the preparation of both a history of logic and a book on systematic philosophy. He was undoubtedly greatly influenced by his studies in classical philosophy (one always associates him with Aristotle) to which may be attributed his breadth of view and his unusual tolerance. He seemed to be above the conflicts of less profound thinkers, and his vision was distant enough to see that apparently contradictory philosophies usually became synthesized in the mould of time. He strenuously rejected subjective idealism, varieties of realism which interpose ideas or essences between the subject and the object (both were regarded as confessions of agnosticism), and pragmatic or activistic points of view. The excitement of his younger friends as they discussed "referents" or danced to the highly syncopated pipings of Herr Wittgenstein's flute was observed with a paternal eye. But he did not think that philosophy should be overweighted with logical positivism or symbolic logic: the psychological, historical, and social contexts were more suitable and significant.

It would seem that in his own positive position he accepted a complete identification of the subject and the object in the act of cognition. The lowest element in knowledge is the judgment. Concepts and images belong to the psychological, not the epistemological, analysis of experience, and cannot themselves constitute judgment. Both the genetic and the anthropological treatments of experience are to be viewed with suspicion; neither of these approaches touches the epistemological question; neither at its best can do more than present successive stages in the complications of specific objects whether mental, human, or animal. One must in knowledge pass from an area which admits of categorization to another area which admits of categorization, and so on. Any attempt to unite successive fields of categorization in terms of behaviour or genetic continuity is eluding knowledge. This type of epistemology has certain affinities with early Aristotelian realism, but there were, in Brett's version, important reser-

vations, particularly with respect to the problem of negation and the nature of limits of analysis.

"The given" in experience is that which permeates and includes the subject and *within which* analysis takes place. This sensibility is neither sensation in the traditional meaning nor like a developed aesthetic experience. Whether we deal with it as a whole or in detail, it is an experience of a qualitative totality or a diversity in some special reference. This was the point of his recurrence to Hobhouse's "Concrete Apprehension," and it also explains why, in discussing questions of religious experience, he invariably urged his students to read Otto's *Idea of the Holy*. Though Brett was never enthusiastic over Hegel's idealism or Bosanquet's doctrine of logical coherence as a test of truth, he approved of the latter's view that the form of thought is a living function and the phases and moments of its function are the varieties and elements of its form. He was critical of the limitations of pragmatism but tolerant of its quest for a doctrine of reality as a condition actually present and "enjoyed" in some measure. It would, one feels, be fair to say that he was a realist—but a realist whom it is difficult to place within the conventional schools, either ancient or modern.

A wide and vivid appreciation of all things in the world around him seems to have been the motive of his realism. Things in their pressing and significant reality are apprehended, and the concepts or categories of thought can be evident only within such a matrix. But the nature of this kind of experience, in relation to what have commonly been known as *sensa*, was not made clear in his teaching; nor did he seem to have a conclusive doctrine of precisely what we are dealing with when we talk about concepts, forms, subsistences. One was left with the impression that he was not very well satisfied with neo-realism, critical realism, or phenomenology, and considered them really rather naïve distortions of experience, too insecurely founded on the predilections of a narrowly intellectualistic approach. Bosanquet could never have charged him (as he did the ordinary realist) with delighting in denial and limitation for its own sake.

Influenced unquestionably by long research on Gassendi and by careful studies of Leibniz and Lotze, Brett's metaphysical position was a form of dynamic pluralism. Significant and intelligible action is the key to explanation; action manifests itself at different levels, the inorganic, the organic, the rational, etc. There are two forms of pluralism, one metaphysical, the other methodological. Existent objects are individuals, and the individual is not to be interpreted (as by the Aristotelians) within the species. To admit the teleology which raises the species above the individual is to bring back the old essence under another guise and to substitute an abstraction for an existent entity. Methodological pluralism emphasizes categorical areas; each specific science has its categories, which in each case constitute an interdefinitive system. As objects become more and more complex, more and more systems of categories are involved in explanation and classification. He believed that no scheme has been devised as yet in which the different systems of categories, such as those of physics and psychology,

are unified within more inclusive categories. Metaphysics is not, therefore, the ultimate general science holding within its framework the more restricted sciences.

Neo-scholasticism, which is very strongly established at Toronto, seems to have had slight attraction for a mind which viewed philosophy essentially as functional and living criticism. In 1926, in answer to certain questions put to him by John S. Zybura, Brett gave the following estimate of the value of the scholastic tradition:

> Speaking for myself only and wishing to be understood as having no natural or acquired connection with the Roman Catholic tradition, I should say that modern philosophy tended to free itself from the religious and political considerations which have obscured the good features of the Scholastic tradition. I should consider that a proper understanding of Plato and Aristotle would show that the merits and defects of Scholasticism are to be measured by the degree to which political, social, and literary conditions caused misunderstanding of these sources; that the process of restoring a true philosophical attitude has been continuous from 430 A.D. to the present time; that consequently the fundamental task of making philosophy adequate to a growing experience, involving the satisfaction of demands arising from Greek, Hebrew, Christian and secular (scientific) sources, will in time be viewed as a common problem to which each period has made its specific contribution. My answer to your questions will therefore be that philosophy must not degenerate into propaganda, but take as its basis the appeal to reason, and on this basis with due regard to historical development we can respect without subservience the great principles of dignity, order, and clarity which were the merits of the scholastic mind and the essence of its enduring achievements.[3]

The great Oxford idealists, Green, Bradley, and Bosanquet, exerted over him a perennial fascination. He realized that they had tried strenuously to reconcile presuppositions not peculiar to themselves with experience as a "given," and to do it on a grand scale. In their thinking, no matter how intellectual reality might be *as a system*, its other characteristic as a *realm of values* arose from the fact that the full nature of the given was their real concern. But he seemed to be afraid that his students would be too readily limited by the special interests of the idealists and so make no advance upon them. It was again perhaps his view of philosophy as functional and living criticism that turned him away from them also—at any rate whatever good things he might have thought about them were kept to himself.

His students often wished that he would give special lectures on his views of the nature of concepts, the relation between sense data and physical objects, the unlimited, space and time, and many other topics. But that was not his method. Perhaps, with all his analytic ability, his approach to philosophy was primarily aesthetic. It seemed to him sufficient to exhibit issues in the varied senses in which others historically had stated them; perhaps he never had time systematically and thoroughly to work out satisfactory views of these problems. In any event it would not appear that he declared himself with any finality on them. He used to remark, "Nature herself has no problems," and again, "We never prove *existence*—we only dispute about interpretations."

[3]J. S. Zybura, *Present-Day Thinkers and the New Scholasticism* (St. Louis, Herder Book Co., 1926), 90.

Brett's administration of the Department of Philosophy was characterized by kindness, fairness, and magnanimity. At his death every member of it had the greatest respect and affection for both his mind and character. They knew him as a man who was free from any trace of pettiness in thought, word or deed in his relationships with them. His contacts with his staff and students, young or old, were characterized by a courtesy and a civility that never failed. Having chosen a man for the department, he assisted him in his efforts to learn and to teach by assigning him as few hours as possible for the first year or two. He encouraged specialization and never interfered, unless his advice was sought, in the teaching, prescription, and general administration of any instructor's particular course. The department was continually advised regarding all major questions of university policy, and new appointments were discussed with members of the permanent staff.

During the period of thirty-six years that Brett taught at Toronto there were certain changes in the policy of the Department of Philosophy. It is known that some of these changes were due directly to his influence and, after 1926, to his administrative initiative. Psychology was set up as a separate department; but he served as its Director from 1921 to 1925. Before this separation occurred, about one-fourth of the work carried on by the Department of Philosophy was in the field of psychology. In recent years he instituted the policy of offering options of psychology, sociology, or economics in the honours course in philosophy; he is also largely responsible for the development of a new honours course in philosophy with the English or history option. In 1908, there was a general course in Greek philosophy but little reading of the texts of Plato and Aristotle; today, both in second-year ethics and history of philosophy more Greek texts are read. The number of courses in various aspects of modern philosophy has been considerably increased; there is less emphasis on the Kantian philosophy; a new course, which Brett himself gave, considers the currents of thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There can be no doubt that both his temperament and his Oxford training fitted in with the predominantly historical programme of the department, and he did little to discourage this tendency.

He believed that instruction received in philosophy should be rated not according to the output of professional philosophers but by the contribution which it makes to the intellectual development of the individual, whatever may be the subsequent career; courses in philosophy should be planned, therefore, to give a knowledge of the major systems of thought as well as the more technical aspects, thus providing a good basis for further studies and a useful supplement to other cultural courses. During the last twenty years, philosophy was made more and more available to students in almost all the departments of the Arts faculty, law, theology, the first year of the Medical faculty, the School of Social Work, the Department of Extension and the courses for teachers. In this same period, the number of students enrolled in the department in the School of Graduate Studies was exception-

ally high, largely owing to the attraction of Professor Brett, coupled with the presence of the Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

Graduate work was initiated at Toronto in the eighteen-eighties under the leadership of James Loudon (afterwards President of the University). Ten fellowships were founded during that period. In 1896 the degree of Ph.D. was established, and in 1903 the old requirements for the degree of Master of Arts were completely recast. Control of graduate courses was exercised by the University Senate until the autumn of 1915, when a Board of Graduate Studies was appointed by the Governors. In 1920, in an article in the *University of Toronto Monthly*, Brett reviewed graduate studies, present and future. Twelve years later President Cody appointed him Dean of the Graduate School in succession to J. C. McLennan. It was a magnificent choice, for Brett's unusual combination of gifts and achievements encompassed almost all phases of the curriculum. As an historian, he was interested in medicine and science; he had a classical training and was familiar with the general field of languages; he was a social and political philosopher and was sympathetic to the development of the social sciences. As Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (he also served as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts in 1935-6) he was a good and conciliatory leader; he dealt with all problems that arose with meticulous care and scrupulous justice; his comprehensive knowledge and sympathy earned the respect and confidence of his colleagues. Whenever he intervened in debate in the Faculty Council or the Senate, he spoke briefly but to the point. He did his utmost to encourage and preserve high standards of scholarship and research in the University. He found considerable stimulus and diversion in presiding at a large number of final oral examinations for the Ph.D. degree; on such occasions he would invariably relieve the strain on the candidate by a kindly but penetrating question. It has been stated that under his guidance the School of Graduate Studies reached for the first time its full status and proper organization.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a significant graduate school in Canada is the insufficient provision of scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships to attract outstanding students from the whole country. In a second article on the School of Graduate Studies, published in 1937, Dean Brett reviewed again its growth and prospects. As he saw it, the principal needs of a graduate school are adequate provision for teaching both as regards staff and equipment, adequate library funds not only to keep up the supply of current books and periodicals but to fill up the gaps and enrich the collection according to the demands of students doing special research, and above all, scholarships and assistantships on a large scale:

> The nucleus of a graduate school must be formed by a liberal supply of financial resources. Whether these are called fellowships, bursaries or demonstratorships is not very important. The important point is that opportunity should be given where ability is discovered. The number of students in a graduate school would be no cause for satisfaction if it was not correlated with proper selection of individuals competent to do the highest kind of work. Experience has proved that sacrifices made necessary by poverty may be laudable but are not desirable: learning should not be bought at the price of health. To-

secure proper selection and to eliminate conditions which necessitate combining study with incompatible and distracting forms of employment it is necessary to have resources from which financial aid can be given to those who should be encouraged to continue their studies. The assistance which has been given to the University in the past has been generous. But in the past the graduate work did not occupy a very conspicuous place and its special requirements did not attract much attention: advanced study was regarded as a luxury suitable to those who could afford to defer for a time the serious business of life. That stage of civilization is gone. Science and scholarship alike have advanced to the level at which the demands can only be met by a greatly prolonged period of preparation. The nation which is going to produce men and women capable of meeting the present demands in literature, science or technology will be compelled to pay the cost from its common resources. The only practical way to do this is to increase the capacity of the existing institutions to provide the necessary training for all those who in any part of the country have demonstrated that their ability and industry are valuable assets which should not be lost.[4]

No account of Brett's career could omit mention of his extensive editorial work and his participation in the activities of learned and scientific societies. He was one of the founders and vice-president of the *Canadian Journal of Religious Thought*, a bi-monthly magazine established in 1924, which published nine volumes of articles on social, political, educational, and moral questions from the religious viewpoint. In addition to taking a full part in the work of the editorial committee which met once a week during the winter months for the discussion of policy, he published six articles in the journal, and contributed generously to its financial support. In 1927 Brett was associated with Carl Murchison, the late Edward B. Titchener, and others in the founding of the *Journal of General Psychology*, and he remained a member of its Board of Editors until his death. In the autumn of 1931 he became a member of the editorial committee of the *International Journal of Ethics*. If the committee had books which for one reason or another presented special difficulty and which fell within his range of interest, he did the reviews for them. Various articles were sent to the editor on his suggestion and he was also helpful in other ways. It was the intention of the editor of the *Journal of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* to invite him to join its editorial staff, and his death is a distinct loss to that enterprise. When the UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY was established fourteen years ago, Brett's enthusiasm for such a journal led Sir Robert Falconer to select him as its first editor. That his interest in it continued after his editorial responsibilities were relinquished to younger associates is evident both from his membership of its Honorary Advisory Board (of which he was chosen Chairman during the summer of 1944) and from the many articles and reviews which he contributed to its pages to the very month of his death. Brett set an example to Canadian scholars, and more especially those in the humanistic fields, through his membership in both national and international learned and scientific organizations. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1919, he participated regularly in its meetings and was honoured with the presidency of Section II in 1933. He was also a member of the Mind Association,

[4] *University of Toronto Monthly*, XXXVII, 1937, 236.

the American Philosophical Association, the International Phenomenological Society, and the Canadian Psychological Association. Apart from the Royal Society, perhaps he valued most the connection with the History of Science Society. Although not a member of the organizing committee, he was one of its charter members and gave valuable administrative guidance on its Council. As Chairman of the Publications Committee Brett read and criticized for the Society many manuscripts dealing with the history of science. It is doubtful if any university has ever had a more prodigious worker, able to carry on his studies, teaching, publishing, and heavy administrative and editorial responsibilities with such apparent ease.

II

The development of psychology as a science in the nineteenth century naturally stimulated interest in its historical background. It is unquestionably more difficult to apply the historical method to psychology than to any other science, and this difficulty is due not only to the equivocal scientific status of psychology but also to the acrimonious temper which has long characterized the controversies between its unresolved schools. In the application of the historical method to psychology there are at least two distinct approaches. One may emphasize the genetic and critical study of the evolution of the hypotheses, postulates, techniques, and discoveries of psychology; or one may stress the historical method as a technique which will assist in the solution of special psychological problems. The latter approach is more and more used as the relationships between psychology and the social sciences are clarified; it is really therefore only another aspect of the application of scientific methods in psychology, and in this sense may properly be considered as part of the data of the first approach. It has also become customary in published research on any specific problem of psychology to summarize in an introductory chapter the previous contributions. The term "history of psychology," however, is generally taken to refer to something more comprehensive. In this more comprehensive meaning the history of psychology may emphasize either the development of experimental psychology (whether in the human or animal fields) or the *general* development of psychology as a science. Again, histories of the latter type may concentrate on surveys of special topics or periods, expositions of the views of particular men or groups, source books, or biographies. Brett's three-volume *History of Psychology*, which is his most outstanding and permanent contribution to scholarship, undertakes to give an account of the general development of psychology in all countries and periods from ancient times through the nineteenth century.

Blakey's *History of the Philosophy of Mind*, which appeared in 1848, was apparently the first book that aroused Brett's interest in this field. Later he read Bain's *Body and Mind* and Sir William Hamilton's edition of Reid's works. Although Ribot published in 1870 his *Psychologie anglaise contemporaine*, and subsequently a history of German psychology, it was not until

some fifteen or twenty years later that the ancient schools first began to receive adequate consideration in Siebeck's *Geschichte der Psychologie*, Chaignet's *Histoire de la psychologie des Grecs*, and Rohde's *Psyche*. Chaignet had undertaken to present a history of ancient psychology, but his work is primarily a history of general philosophy and metaphysics, while Rohde's curious book is concerned mainly with anthropology. Siebeck's book, published in 1887, was the only genuine earlier history of ancient psychology, and Brett acknowledged freely his debt of gratitude to its learning, excellent method, and sound judgment. Only two other general works, Dessoir's *Abriss einer Geschichte der Psychologie* and Klemm's *Geschichte der Psychologie*, had appeared and there was no book at all on the subject in the English language when Brett published, in 1912, the first volume of his *History of Psychology*. This contribution was immediately hailed by critics as the greatest treatise in the field in any language. What were the influences and circumstances that led him to undertake this massive work?

While a student at Oxford, Brett had attended Thomas Case's lectures on Aristotle's psychology, in which topics such as sensation, memory, habit, and intellect were discussed from the point of view of the old "mental philosophy." But, owing no doubt to the scientific interest stimulated during the Kingswood days, he seems to have remained restless and dissatisfied with this arid approach. Then he read James's *Principles of Psychology*. It is perhaps not merely a coincidence that his last considerable contribution to scholarship was a chapter entitled, "The Psychology of William James in Relation to Philosophy," which appeared in a co-operative volume published in 1942 to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of James's birth. Under the spell of the greatest of American psychologists Brett began to realize, somewhat dimly at first but very clearly by 1908, that philosophical thought could be studied anew in terms of the expansion of the idea of mind and body. As James emphasized again and again the interaction of philosophy and science through the ages, it gradually became more and more obvious to Brett that the locus or middle ground of this intellectual interaction lay between the fields of logic and physiology, that is, in psychology. Henceforth he was interested in the problem of the emergence of psychology from an undifferentiated mass of literature on human nature and social behaviour. A re-reading of the great philosophers convinced him that many of their most valuable insights into human nature had been neglected owing to a theological or metaphysical emphasis. As these investigations progressed, he realized also the importance of studying more practical subjects like rhetoric, education, ethics, politics, and theology. The outcome of this vast research was his own monumental history of psychology.

Although the three volumes of this work run to over eleven hundred pages, he stated more than once that, even so, the original manuscript had had to be pruned down severely for purposes of publication. In his more important writings, with the exception of the very early *Philosophy of*

Gassendi, Brett appears primarily as an historian of psychology. May one venture the hypothesis that in certain of his later, more specialized papers on the history of science, and even in *The Government of Man*, he was making excellent use of the vast mass of material which was originally accumulated in the preparation of his greatest book? Such a conclusion would suggest that the work on the history of psychology was the supreme intellectual adventure of his life, but at the same time it would be unsound to assume that Brett was not interested primarily in philosophy. In a new approach to the history of psychology, it would seem that he had found a field in which could be established, from the first and throughout his life, a fruitful synthesis of interests in philosophy, psychology, medicine, science, and, to a lesser extent, religion. In Brett's life-work we have perhaps as complete a synthesis of these varied approaches as it is possible for a human being to attain in the twentieth century; and the training which enabled him to achieve this synthesis is evident from his school days. He was among the first (but he will not be the last) to discover that philosophy, religion, and all the sciences, whether natural or social, have a common meeting-ground in psychology.

In our age the departmental status of psychology is indeterminate; it is no longer a branch of philosophy, but not everyone admits that it is as yet a branch of science. No one could have appreciated more keenly than Brett the difficulty of defining even the term "psychology," a term which refers in ancient and patristic times to the science of the "soul," in the late medieval and early modern period to the science of "mind," in the nineteenth century to the science of "consciousness," and more recently to the science of "behaviour." He maintained that the historian of psychology is not obliged to give a definition. "History alone can adequately unfold the content of the idea denoted by the word 'Psyche' or explain the various meanings that have from age to age been assigned to the science of the soul." Nor would he write the history of psychology from the standpoint of any one of the controversial schools:

> The business of the historian is to record rather than interpret .... A history of psychology must not anticipate; it must be a record of beliefs about the soul and of the growth of the human mind in and through the development of those beliefs. Here if anywhere the fundamental axiom is that the evolution of thought is part of the whole evolution. There may ultimately be no evidence that any human powers have been atrophied or otherwise lost; there may be no ground to believe that any age has had spiritual possibilities greater than our own; but in the process of collecting the data for such judgments it would be a fallacy to presuppose the conclusion.[5]

The historian must therefore record chronologically and impartially the steps by which psychology has reached its present stage of development.

[5] *History of Psychology* (1912), I, x. Quotations from the three-volume *History* are given at some length owing to the difficulty of obtaining the set nowadays. In this connection the distinguished American psychologist, Knight Dunlap, has commented: "Brett's book is out of print; not obtainable second-hand; and one or more of the three volumes lost from various libraries. Complete sets of Brett are so invaluable that the library possessing one should keep it under lock and key, and not allow it to be used by any but scholars and exceptional graduate students."

One ordinarily expects to find in the history of any science an account of the facts which have been discovered and the theories which have been established in that science. But everybody knows that very few *facts* about the mind have been discovered and that psychological theories are merely successive variations upon a comparatively small number of themes. Discussions of metaphysical assumptions, methods of inquiry, and principles of interpretation must therefore occupy a far more prominent place in psychology than the statement of facts, laws, or practical applications. In spite of these limitations, psychology in the course of its development has influenced many spheres of human thought; the history of psychology is accordingly very complex and a rigorous selection of material is necessary. In the selection of material and the grouping of data, Brett regarded the nature of man as forming the centre of three great lines of interest: "the study of human activities as the psychologist sees them, the study of human life as the doctor looks at it, and the growth of systematic beliefs as reflected in philosophy and religion." An autobiography of the human mind would be given through a union of these in their historical development. It was admitted at the outset that such a history would be extremely complicated and almost inextricably entangled with the history of the natural sciences, not to mention all manner of metaphysical and theological speculations. The complications of the history of ideas must be exhibited in the history of psychology, but the historian would not lose his way if the central emphasis were retained:

> The main emphasis is laid on what may be called psychological data in the strict sense; around these data are grouped such theories as diverge from the phenomena of consciousness to derivative doctrines of the soul's antecedents, environment, and future possibilities. The relevant parts of medical and religious theories are regarded as supplementing psychology in two different directions; the treatment of them is subordinated to psychology as the main theme.[5]

With these criteria and considerations before him, Brett undertook the fourfold task of giving for each historical period an account of the state of the sciences which influenced psychology, the state of psychology itself, the influence of psychology upon other sciences, and its general applications. It was clear from the beginning that the history of psychology must be interpreted as a part of the larger history of science. In magnificent prose he has set forth his conception of the permanent educational significance of the whole enterprise:

> A history of a science is a unique species of history. For the content of the science the student may go to the last textbook, where he may learn the established truths without any reference to their genesis or to the men who established them. For those who require no more a history is superfluous: it can add nothing to that knowledge and may be wholly disregarded. But there is another and a different object for which it has a specific function. If the student is not to be left with the idea that knowledge is a fixed quantity of indisputable facts, if on the contrary he is to acquire a real understanding of the process by which knowledge is continually made and remade, he must learn to look at the movement of ideas without prejudice as a separate fact with its own significance and its own meaning for humanity. To despise forgotten theories because they no longer hold good, and refuse

[5] *Ibid.*, I, viii.

on that account to look backward, is in the end to forget that man's highest ambition is to make progress possible, to make the truth of today into the error of yesterday—in short, to make history.

Psychology is in some sense a new science, but it has progressed far enough to be conscious of its own claims. It seems, therefore, worth while at this stage to give it the support which may be derived from history. The importance claimed for that history is derived from the ideas expressed above. It is not the kind of importance which belongs either to new discoveries or to antiquarian lore. It is rather the importance that belongs to the great panorama of human effort which it consistently unfolds. However many new psychologies rise and fall, however much the final solution of all problems seems to us to be given only to our own generation, it will still be worth while to contemplate this spectacle of a quest which has called forth from the beginning of time the most passionate desires, the most distorted theories, the most bitter disputes, and the most refined thought possible to the human being. It is not for the historian to utter prophesy, but the eye which surveys the whole course of this subject from its meagre beginnings to its present vastness cannot but anticipate a future growth no less significant and perhaps of incredible importance to the human race.[7]

Within the scope of the present article it would be impossible to convey an adequate impression of the rich contents of Brett's *History*, but perhaps one may refer briefly to a few of its more salient features. The first volume opens with an account of the characteristics of primitive thought and a discussion of the relation between scientific views and religious beliefs. A consideration of the early Greek philosophers and medical schools is followed by a careful and lengthy analysis in seven chapters of the psychological theories of Plato and Aristotle. Brief descriptions of the Indian, Egyptian, Persian, and Hebrew standpoints precede a fascinating comparison of Hebrew and Hellenic schools of thought, after which the Pauline psychology, the Alexandrian school, Origen, the Pneumatists, the Neo-Platonists, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustine receive detailed treatment. One is impressed throughout by the author's careful statement of his sources and authorities, his sound scientific sense of his responsibilities, his freedom from predilections, and his powerful synoptic faculty. The differences between ancient and modern belief and opinion are appreciated, but at the same time one is made profoundly conscious of the indebtedness of modern thought to the psychological and ethical speculations of the ancients. The treatment of Plotinus is especially illuminating; it is maintained that in his writings, "for the first time in its history, psychology becomes the science of the phenomena of consciousness, conceived as self-consciousness." Brett's compact style is an unusual combination of sanity, objectivity, distinction, and clearness. The calm beauty of its unhurried cadences may perhaps be illustrated best by reference to his sympathetic evaluation of the psychological doctrine of Augustine's *Confessions*.

Here we have clearly a state of feeling, the awakening of thoughts that lie too deep for words, vivid realisation of limitless possibilities, and a condition charged with greater power than is found in the detached thinking of daily life. But there is in it nothing more than intensity verging on passionate self-abandonment to aspirations. These are conditions by no means uncommon in the history of genius; whether the vision is of gain or sacrifice, of empire or wealth, of earthly success or heavenly reward, life has its supreme moments

[7] *Ibid.*, II, 6-7.

of elevation for all who aspire. Whether we condemn them as illusions or explain them as pathological they remain undeniable psychological data. The interpretation put upon them is a different point. Augustine chooses to regard these exalted states as really highest and nearest the godlike. On the correctness of this nothing need be said here, and it is enough to remark that Augustine regards inspiration as the inflowing or inbreathing of transcendent superhuman powers; the artist, for example, has for the origin of his ideas a beauty which is transcendent, he does not see it in things, but looks through things to it. So in music, harmony is not a sequence of sounds but something over and above the sounds, some deep significance or eternal meaning which has taken upon itself this mode of appearance. Ultimately, indeed, all comes back to one phrase, God is all; the unity of all life's phases is found in oneself, a spiritual unity without quantity or diversity; and the unity of all spirits is likewise the one Spirit, God.

Augustine excels in his work because of the intense feeling which inspired it. No other philosopher ever wrote of the great mystery of being so as to show the agony of his thought in the way that Augustine wrote in the "Confessions." There we have not only a theory but an autobiography of the soul, and the words come slowly as of one wrestling with his thoughts. The mind of Augustine seemed to take up all existent theories; flashes from Plotinus, Stoic writers, Clement and Origen light up this page or that; we seem to catch here and there a glimpse of familiar light shining from afar; but there is no denying that the brilliance of Augustine eclipses all those: he stands with the greatest, with Plato and Aristotle, and in one respect is superior to them. Psychology reaches a second great climax when its expositor can say that the foundation of the soul is continuous self-consciousness and thought is simply life reflected into itself.[8]

The second volume of the *History* deals with the background of medieval thought, the development of psychology from the ninth to the end of the sixteenth century, and the rise of the modern temper in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The chapters on the Arabian teachers and the groundwork of medieval thought are especially illuminating. Brett maintains that Europe owes the Arabs a debt of gratitude not only for their preservation of ancient documents but also for their development of the idea of experience, or the reflective study of the inner life, in such a way that new ideas might later emerge. He also emphasizes the gradual restoration of Aristotelian doctrine, modified so as to conform to theology, in the work of men like Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. The sixteenth century is pictured primarily as an age of destruction, with the result that in the seventeenth there was a desire not necessarily to create new systems but to think systematically under the new conditions. In dealing with psychology in the eighteenth century the author evidently found that he could not strictly adhere to the chronological method, and a new order, partly national, partly topical, replaced the original plan. The last part of the volume contains chapters on British psychology, continental empiricism, the beginnings of German psychology, and the influence and applications of psychology in the eighteenth century.

The third volume is concerned mainly with the nineteenth century, but it refers also to certain men whom we ordinarily think of as twentieth-century figures. Three chapters on the transition to the modern point of of view in Britain, France, and Germany are followed by a consideration of modern psychology which occupies three-quarters of the volume. Early

[8] *Ibid.*, I, 347-8.

in his treatment of this period Brett raises the important question as to whether scientific psychology can dispense with metaphysics:

> All through the centuries thought has been observed trailing a cloud of speculation; saints and scientists seem to present themselves ultimately with the same golden halo, worn with complacence or irritation according to their respective temperaments. And here, in the middle of the nineteenth century, we find the same problems that troubled Plato still unsolved, and a mind that embraces Platonism and Atomism [the reference is to Fechner], repeating again the lost formulae that should exorcise the mystery. It is time to face the matter squarely.
>
> Psychology, of course, has nothing to do with metaphysics; the psychologist asks, "What are metaphysics?" in the tone of the man who said, "Who is my neighbour?" When the issue becomes practical, this kind of destructive innuendo fails; the psychology proves to have a private metaphysics at least, or it avenges itself by giving a psychological explanation of all other metaphysics. In this the psychologist shows a true instinct; to offer a psychological explanation of the metaphysical mind is to invite a psychological explanation of the psychologist's mind; but this the psychologist can reserve for himself. Ultimately, without doubt, there must be in some sense a psychological explanation for all systems of speculative thought. Whether that means the consequent rejection of all systems, as exploded fictions, is quite another question. To give a psychological explanation of a course of thought is not the same thing as proving it a form of madness. Yet there is no doubt that to the average man giving a psychological explanation of a system of ideas means really discounting its value; it is as if you tapped your skull with your forefinger and looked knowingly at the audience. If your action did not imply that the author of the system was mad, it would at least be taken to mean that his ideas were "peculiar," very much his own, not universal.[9]

A reading of the history of psychology leaves little doubt that the views held by psychologists about such problems as the nature and structure of the mind, or its relation to the brain, have been influenced, even in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by their philosophy. In discussing Lotze, Brett puts this question very forcefully for a second time:

> From neural processes he [Lotze] passes to activities that have only "secondary" neural equivalents; from these to activities to which nothing physiological seems to correspond; finally, to new categories such as activity and value, that seem no longer part of the world in which we touch, taste, or smell. This may be a justifiable procedure. The complexity of data may render all other treatments less adequate. The empiricist may acquire his convincing simplicity only by suppressing facts; the idealist may be wrong in neglecting the principles which science overworks; there may be room for a mediator, an idealistic realist—in a word, for such a man as Lotze.
>
> It is an open question whether a psychologist can be an idealist or a realist. He should perhaps be simply a psychologist. But apart from collectors of detail and writers of monographs, history has failed to produce a psychologist who was not a philosopher of some kind; and it is notorious that a rejection of all metaphysics is the most metaphysical of all positions. The fruits of the sciences may be plucked by every chance comer; yet the tree that bears them must strike its roots deep or quickly wither away. Lotze's psychology has not perished yet. For that reason, if for no other, it deserves a careful valuation, root and branch. The central problem is the question of method. Is psychology a branch of physiology, or a department of metaphysics? To call it a science is ambiguous. If by science we mean a natural science, what is the meaning of nature? Is there one nature for science and another for philosophy? Is metaphysics necessarily the antithesis of science? The answer depends on the most fundamental of all sciences—the science of categories, terms, or classification. A new point of view, as opposed to a discovery of detail, is essentially a reform of the categories.[10]

[9] *Ibid.*, III, 129-30. [10] *Ibid.*, III, 147-8.

These passages have been quoted because the most common charge against Brett, especially in the United States, is that he devotes too much space to a discussion of purely epistemological and metaphysical problems. This criticism reflects of course the highly self-conscious and almost desperate attempts that American psychologists have made in our time to emancipate their science from epistemology and metaphysics. So far it would seem that their efforts, and those of their allies the logical positivists, have failed; the desired "standpointlessness" has *not* been achieved. At the same time one must in all fairness admit that Brett's treatment of modern psychologists does tend to be unduly philosophical. His interest in medicine enabled him to appreciate the physiological approach to mind, and his Oxford training made him alive to the cultural and social backgrounds of psychology. But he seems to have had only a flickering interest in the laboratory and statistical techniques that have been developed during the last hundred years. In his treatment of nineteenth-century psychologists he is excessively partial to Lotze, Ward, and Stout; it would appear that his own philosophical problems and ideals were satisfied by the work of such men. It is true that the founders of laboratory psychology, men like Fechner, Wundt, Ebbinghaus, and various members of the "Würzburg" school are considered, but here again Brett is inclined to deal almost entirely with their attitudes towards essentially philosophical questions rather than to inform us regarding their experimental methods and their detailed results.

Why did he not discuss more adequately the experimental psychologists of the modern period? Several answers may be given to this question. Perhaps Brett neglected this phase because he considered that the laboratory tradition had been dealt with so thoroughly in Klemm's masterly work that very little supplementation was required. Then, too, laboratory or "brass instrument" psychology seems to have bored him as much as it bored James (who died only two years before the first volume of the *History* appeared). There was a close resemblance between these two men in another respect: both were so far indifferent to formal distinctions as not to care greatly whether they were treating psychology philosophically or philosophy psychologically. And after nearly twenty-five years of study in these fields the present writer finds himself still asking with James and Brett, "Where is the dividing line?" Nor can he ever quite forget his own disillusionment many years ago with regard to nineteenth-century experimental psychology when, under the impact of both the Behaviouristic and the Gestalt criticisms, the futility of the whole Wundtian tradition in psychophysics became clear! What *is* experimental psychology?

A second general criticism of Brett's method refers to his constant tracing of views and theories back to Plato, Aristotle, or Plotinus, accompanied by an almost equal emphasis on the anticipations of modern views in writers like Witelo, Roger Bacon, or Duns Scotus. Is a modern theory explained when it is traced back to Aristotle? Are there any real anticipations in philosophy or psychology? One can readily understand

why this synoptic approach has "nettled" many readers, from the following example in his chapter on the thirteenth century:

> A complete account of Thomas's views could only be given at the cost of repeating most of what has been already ascribed to Albert. The reader is asked to remember what has gone before and to reflect for a moment on what is to be developed later. We have here already the cleft between mind and matter which Descartes will be found developing later; we have, too, the Cartesian principle of union through God; and, at the same time, there is more than one suggestion of that later Aristotelianism which Kant so ingeniously elaborated.[11]

That Brett was utterly unrepentant in this respect becomes clear when one turns to his *Psychology, Ancient and Modern*, published seven years after the *History*. In this later work, under topical headings such as the Physiological Basis, the Analysis of Cognition, the Psychology of Conduct, and Applied Psychology, he analyses sympathetically and with his customary great learning and subtlety the interrelations between the ancient and modern periods. But more than half of the book is concerned with a discussion of the contributions of Plato and Aristotle to general and applied psychology. In defence of this procedure he maintains that all knowledge of fact, all scientific knowledge is cumulative:

> For that reason the modern achievement so far surpasses the ancient that comparison becomes futile. On the other side of the account we may reckon the fact that a building which adds section upon section through two thousand years and yet presents astonishing continuity and stability, must have been founded on a firm basis. That was the great merit of the Greeks who laid the foundation, and it deserves to be commemorated 'with natural piety.' Still more might be said to support the plea that in many respects the Greek point of view has never been fully understood or quite superseded, but that might develop into special pleading and would certainly obscure the distinction between philosophy and psychology which now dominates our departmentalized institutions of learning. As the Greeks made no such distinction it is a delicate task to observe conscientiously the lines of cleavage.[12]

A third of a century has elapsed since Brett published the first volume of the *History*. Meanwhile over a dozen books dealing with either the general history of psychology or the history of some specialized period or problem have been published by such eminent British and American psychologists as Baldwin, Boring, Fearing, Flügel, Murphy, Pillsbury, and Warren. In the perspective provided by these more recent studies what is the contemporary estimate of Brett's achievement? Perhaps no living psychologist is better qualified to give an appraisal than Gardner Murphy:

> The place of Brett's three-volume *History of Psychology* is absolutely secure, no matter how many later histories may be written, for at a time when the English language possessed no book giving historical perspective for psychology he made available the distillation of a lifetime's work, in which not only Plato and Aristotle, but also ancient India; not only the Dark Ages, but the preservation of Greek intellectual treasures throughout their duration; not only the Renaissance of the arts, but also the Renaissance of the scientific spirit, were lovingly portrayed, and presented as background for the understanding of that nineteenth-century experimental psychology in which the methods of natural science were at last systematically applied. In an era in which experimental psychologists tended to repudiate the past, it was Brett first and Brett chiefly, who made available to English-speaking psychologists the historical context and meaning of their subject.

[11] *Ibid.*, II, 116. [12] *Psychology, Ancient and Modern* (1928), 155.

Owing to his world pre-eminence during the past twenty years as an historian of psychology Brett was honoured with invitations to contribute the article in this field to the fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and to participate in international symposia entitled *Feelings and Emotions* and *Psychologies of 1930*. In these two volumes he was associated with psychologists of enduring renown like Janet, Köhler, Langfeld, McDougall, Pavlov, and Woodworth. His chapter on "Association and 'Act' Psychology" in *Psychologies of 1930* illustrates his historical method at its best. In modern times two ideals of method have persisted in psychology in the emphasis on "act" and "association": the former stresses the unique activity which constitutes a psychic event, while the latter points to the dependence of thought on the order and connection of objective happenings. Brett's account of the historical development of these two tendencies, their interrelations and their influence in contemporary psychology exhibits such brilliant constructive powers that one might claim for him the rank of an outstanding systematic psychologist. Would it be too much to say that his total contribution to the history of psychology is so unparalleled and so significant that future historians of the subject will no more be able to neglect him than if he had been one of the greatest of twentieth-century scientific psychologists?

III

During the last seventy-five years the Hegelian-Darwinian theory of "development" has led to an increasing emphasis on the importance of the historical approach to the problems of philosophy. As a result of this interest, European and American scholars have carried out a vast amount of research not only on the general history of philosophy but also on special periods and individual thinkers. Brett's earliest publication, a monograph on Pierre Gassendi, indicates that the historical approach to philosophy had profoundly influenced him. In writing this book (which has remained the only work on Gassendi in English) he was not merely concerned to fill in an hiatus in the history of philosophy; he wished also to correct two common misconceptions, based largely on ignorance, which identified Gassendi's name merely with opposition to Descartes in both physics and philosophy and with the advocacy of a sort of patched-up Epicurean materialism.

Gassendi, who was actually the first modern philosopher to attempt a systematic reconstruction of atomism, wrote a *Syntagma Philosophicum* which is characterized by "prolixity of statement," "prodigality of learning," and "display of erudition," and which runs to six volumes folio, with a total of 4,095 double-columned pages. Holding the view that a proper appreciation of Gassendi's importance depends upon a knowledge of the *Syntagma* (which has never been translated from the Latin into English), Brett devoted a large part of the monograph to a summary of it. In accordance with this design, an introductory chapter on the historical development of

the atomistic type of thought is followed by a lengthy but compact account of Gassendi's views on logic, physics, ethics, and the nature of God. Throughout this exposition, which displays an admirable union of enthusiastic interest and temperate judgment, Brett tries to confine himself, as far as possible, to an objective account of Gassendi's text and to leave an evaluation to a concluding general review. Nevertheless, long before the final interpretative chapters are reached one feels that the author has made out his case, if not for the originality, at any rate for the importance, of the long-neglected seventeenth-century French philosopher. For Brett makes it clear that Gassendi's work must be considered an integral part of philosophy conceived as a moving body of ideas: "He has tried to unite the results, not only of philosophy in the narrower sense, but of all previous and contemporary thought, into one whole, as consistent as he thought it could be." Gassendi sought to establish a synthetic philosophy for the seventeenth century; his aims may be compared with those of Herbert Spencer in the nineteenth century: "The difference of their material is a significant comment on what has been done; and their similarity an equally significant comment on what has not been achieved."

One sometimes hears it said that Brett's concluding chapter, which is mainly concerned with a discussion of the epistemological and metaphysical theories of Leibniz and Lotze, is irrelevant in the sense that it hardly contributes to a further understanding of Gassendi himself. It must be admitted that this criticism is very largely justified. Further, neither Leibniz nor Lotze was influenced by Gassendi's views. Why, then, were their epistemological and metaphysical theories discussed at considerable length? The answer to this question involves another, "What had attracted Brett to Gassendi in the first place?" Now the clue to the answer to this latter question consists in the realization that, during the years he was working on Gassendi, Brett was struggling to develop for himself satisfactory positions in epistemology and metaphysics, and the seemingly irrelevant concluding chapter of the *Philosophy of Gassendi* is a piece of intellectual autobiography, thinly disguised, in which this inner conflict is recorded. One hears, as it were, the young Brett thinking aloud about the merits of monism and pluralism, idealism and realism, with Gassendi, Leibniz and Lotze[13] standing by to supply him with arguments in favour of pluralism and realism. Nowhere else in his published writings, as far as one can discover, has Brett given as much insight into his own positions in epistemology and metaphysics as in this concluding chapter.

It becomes clear from this "autobiographical" revelation that Brett had certain characteristics in common with Gassendi, Leibniz, and Lotze—and it was these common characteristics which had originally attracted him to a study of Gassendi. All four were men of boundless learning and comprehensiveness of outlook or breadth of vision, with a power to see,

[13]It is altogether likely that Brett's interest in Lotze was first aroused by Blunt who, although he did not subscribe to a philosophical system, regarded Lotze very highly and thought that he had uttered most of the truth.

and not merely look at, the vast array of the knowable. They were profoundly interested in and influenced by science, but at the same time they were strongly opposed to materialism. (Brett was especially anxious to clear Gassendi of the charge of materialism.) They reacted vigorously against Galileo's bifurcation of nature and the Cartesian dualism which attempted to give it philosophical respectability. They stood in opposition also to Descartes' theory of representative perception which cut asunder the subject and the object in the act of cognition and resulted in the subjectivistic temper of much modern philosophy. Positively, they were pluralists in metaphysics and to a greater or less extent realists in epistemology.[14] And all of them were constantly searching for a world view in which justice would be done equally to the One and the Many, Subject and Object, Philosophy and Science. None of them attained the goal for which he sought so long and eagerly, but can there be any reasonable doubt that each of them in his own way made some contribution, however great or small, to a fuller understanding of the great mystery of Being?

During the thirty-six years after the completion of his book on Gassendi, Brett contributed numerous articles and reviews to journals of philosophy, psychology, science, and religion. As a reviewer of philosophical and psychological works of wide range (from A. E. Taylor's *Varia Socratica* to J. R. Kantor's *Social Psychology*), he sought always to give the reader as adequate an idea as possible of the actual contents of the book, and any comments on its value were free from the unkind criticisms of the controversial schools. Some twenty of his articles fall within the field of the history of philosophy broadly interpreted to include certain aspects of the history of science and the history of literature. Five of them are concerned with the lives and times of Maimonides, Berkeley, James, Santayana, and Paul Elmer More. Here the dominant problem is the influence of personal and social factors in the determination of the structure of philosophical systems (but not at all in Lenin's sense). One derives from these studies a deeper knowledge of the "psychology of philosophers" without at the same time becoming sceptical regarding the referential aspects of conflicting systems.

Of half a dozen or more papers which deal with the history of science the most significant would seem to be "The History of Science as a factor in Modern Education," prepared for the Royal Society of Canada and inspired, apparently, by the foundation of the History of Science Society in 1924. In this paper Brett gave his most characteristic expression of his concern over the long-continued and growing separation of science and the humanities in our educational systems:

> Experience has shown that there is a double need for reuniting Science and the humanities. The highly technical character of modern science has produced two results One result is the tendency to ignore the organic relation between science and the totality

[14]The epistemological position of Leibniz is extremely difficult to define, as Brett admits in his *Philosophy of Gassendi*, 270-9. Those who are interested in a more recent elaboration of this point may wish to see also the present writer's "Leibniz' Theory of Matter" (*Philosophy of Science*, III, 1936, 208-14).

of human life, leading to a pathetic ignorance of the very complex way in which social evolution proceeds. The other result is the active opposition toward scientific teaching which has unexpectedly shown itself, most conspicuously in the now famous attack on the doctrine of evolution. One of the problems of modern education is to discover the source of these troubles and, if possible, create a remedy.[15]

As he saw the situation, the only remedy was the humanizing of the sciences through the use of the historical method.

He maintained that two great ideas of Hegel's philosophy of history, the idea of continuity and the idea of the organic totality of life, are essential to the historical approach not only in science but in all other fields of inquiry as well. The development of specialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has led to an increasing departmentalization in our educational institutions—a departmentalization which is incompatible with both of these great Hegelian ideas, and from which, incidentally, the literary historians have probably suffered the most. In a period when the highest intellectual achievements are those having primary contact with scientific progress it is essential to break down departmental walls and diffuse as widely as possible a knowledge of the achievements of modern science in their historical and cultural setting:

Science is essentially cumulative and has a principle of growth; it is therefore historically determined. Science is one of the major sources of change in the character of national life, and can be shown both to act on and to depend on, the general life of the community. These relations constitute the historical significance of a science, and that fact is of primary importance. It is sometimes thought that only a great scientist could write the history of a science. Unless specially trained the great scientist would probably fail: for he would value all the factors in terms of their ultimate truth, while the complex conditions of success would escape him. But the humanistic element latent in a genuine history of science could only be exposed by the writer who had a power to comprehend the struggle as much as the outcome, the spirit as much as the achievement, the necessity for a suitable environment as well as the need for a genius to whom the truth is revealed.[16]

No one could have argued more vigorously than Brett for the importance of science; at the same time no one could have protested more vigorously than he against the superstition that "Science is All."[17] For he realized too well that science has not inevitably been the benefactor of society, rescuing it from political strife or religious mania; nor has science been entirely free from bigotry and narrowmindedness. It would be good for scientists to know that they are not independent of social forces; the history of science would give them an essential insight into their failures as well as their successes: "The object of a history of science is not to produce scientific discoveries so much as to create the right attitude toward science, and to make people realise that the spirit of discovery is only a species of curiosity which is innate in most minds, and with proper encouragement can survive the monotony of routine."[18] His technical contributions to this field (such as the papers on "Astronomical Symbolism" and "The Effect of the Discovery of the Barometer on Contemporary Thought")

[15] *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XIX, 1925, sec. II, 39. [16] *Ibid.*, 42.
[17] See "The Limits of Science" (*University of Toronto Monthly*, XIV, 1913, 34-8).
[18] *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XIX, 1925, sec. II, 46.

are rich illustrations of the power of the philosophic intelligence to illuminate that type of cultural environment which sustains and fosters the growth of the scientific outlook.

While in India, Brett edited, for the use of Indian students, a volume of representative English poems, in the introduction to which he exhibits a keen awareness of the interrelations between philosophy and literature. Ten years afterwards this theme was developed more fully in a paper on "Parallel Paths in Philosophy and Literature," and later still essays on "Aristotle's Theory of Tragedy" and on "Shelley's Relation to Berkeley and Drummond" were contributed to memorial or co-operative volumes. He refused to separate rigidly philosophy and science; he was equally unaware of any gulf between philosophy and literature. In fact he believed that Greek and Roman literature and philosophy could be made a single comprehensive topic if properly treated.[19] Nor can one conceive of the existence of modern literature without postulating a system of social relations in which one finds some degree of science and philosophy as well as fiction or poetry—there is a common foundation of all.[20] Brett had a lesson of high relevance for Canadians, and one that they have hardly yet begun to learn—the lesson that all through history creative achievements in literature and art have been the result not merely of accident or fancy but of great ideas critically maintained.

Although Brett held professorships of ethics at both Trinity and University Colleges, he published nothing (apart from book reviews) which could be considered as technical contributions to this subject. One received the impression that he found it difficult, if not impossible, to think in terms of the traditional academic ethics, and that he considered courses which consisted mainly of refutations of the fallacies of hedonism to be a waste of time. From his point of view, ethics and social and political philosophy are inseparable; and this union is emphasized even in his paper on "The Problem of Freedom after Aristotle," which is otherwise mainly an historical survey. In his encyclopædia article on "Thomas Hill Green" it is maintained that "the moral philosopher is most severely tested at the point where the individual and the common good come into consideration, for he has then to choose the way in which he will formulate their relation and maintain their agreement or their incompatibility." The same year that these words were written, Brett published *The Government of Man*, which was described as an introduction to ethics and politics.

This book represented almost a new venture in both ethics and political science, for it was an attempt to interpret ethical and political theories in terms of their social and historical setting. Brett believed that it is possible to write on logic, ethics, or metaphysics without being truly philosophic, but it is not possible to be truly philosophic without coming to terms with the daily life of common people. Ethical and political speculations have

[19] "Parallel Paths in Philosophy and Literature" (*University Magazine*, XVIII, 1919, 220).

[20] *Ibid.*, 237.

been controlled by the intellectual climate of their time. Accordingly, in selecting the material for *The Government of Man* he emphasized the economic, political, social, and religious conditions which have characterized each period in the development of western civilization from early times to the nineteenth century. The contents of this book cannot be described in detail here, but in an age in which people are so universally disorganized that terms like "schizophrenia" and "maladjustment" have become commonplaces, it is perhaps well to direct attention to Brett's conception of the organized life:

> The life of the individual is a series of events more or less capable of becoming a system. As a rule, the life of the child is less organised than that of the adult, and maturity is the period of greatest organisation. There are, of course, many different types of organisation: in some cases a high degree of concentration upon a single idea or purpose will produce an exact adjustment of every other part of the person's life to this one end; and this may occur very early in life. Still, in reference to the average man, it is true that life exhibits a process towards unity of system, and we may accept the formula that life begins in action and ends in conduct. Conduct, in this terminology, signifies action brought under a rule, and corresponds therefore to what we mean by moral as opposed to non-moral action. In this context moral means simply "regulated by a principle." The distinction of goodness and badness does not appear until we distinguish within the sphere of moral action the species called good and bad. When that is done, the moral (as opposed to the non-moral) subdivides into moral and immoral.[21]

Although he begins with a definition of morality, Brett would have been the last to claim that this book was an original contribution to ethics as such. It was conceived, essentially, as a popular and historical introduction to great contemporary problems, among which might be mentioned the future of democracy, the relation of public to private morality, the meaning of religion for the state and for the individual, and the power and the weakness of reason or of feeling. But the student of social and political philosophy may still find that its illuminating generalizations will help him to appreciate more fully the different influences that have joined to create the moral and political outlook of every stage of civilization. The present generation, confronted as it is with ever wilder political prophets, could also learn much from Brett's unfailing sense of proportion and balance, which was reflected in a quiet, dry sense of humour directed against any form of extravagance in thought and expression. For, above all, he sought to inculcate care and soundness of judgment in the discussion of ethics and politics.

Sixteen years after he had completed *The Government of Man* Brett reached the point where he wished to develop a systematic treatise on political philosophy. But at that very time he received several invitations to contribute articles on psychological topics; one of these invitations, from the Ontario Minister of Education, resulted in his writing an *Introduction to Psychology* for use in the provincial school system (during 1921-2 he had lectured on the Science of Education at the Ontario College of Education). Shortly afterwards, he assumed heavy administrative responsibilities and the only fruit of his revived interest in political thought was his brief Royal

[21] *The Government of Man*, 1.

Society paper on "The Interpretation of Political Theory," in which he concluded that for students of ethical and political doctrine Plato and Aristotle remain the indispensable bases and the unsurpassed teachers.

Canadians are characterized both by a too great hastiness in drawing conclusions on social and political questions and by an unreflective optimism with respect to the automatic development of their country's prosperity. These national weaknesses may well have discouraged Brett from making more positive contributions to social and political philosophy, at least in literary form. For his matured ideas on these subjects were never constructively developed; he confined himself to neat apothegms and telling summations. But his constant effort to see special problems in the larger setting of history had a very salutary effect on Canadian scholarship in that it helped to deter the younger men from making superficial generalizations and led them instead to build on a more solid foundation of knowledge. He was not the sort of man who would discuss the first principles of ethics and politics in the smoking compartment of a Pullman car; his best reflections on these subjects were uttered in the company of people with whom he was entirely at home. It is a distinct loss to Canada that they never reached a larger public.

Any final estimate of Brett's contribution to philosophy, whether in his teaching or his publications, must necessarily emphasize the unique historical and synoptic method which he employed in the treatment of philosophical problems. But it would be a mistake to assume that, because the historical approach predominated, he did not possess a powerful capacity for philosophical analysis as well. For when he wished, as in his courses of lectures on Hobhouse's *Theory of Knowledge* or Mill's *System of Logic*, he could analyse points with all the logical subtlety of Moore or Wittgenstein. But he used the analytic method very rarely in his philosophical publications, and even then it was never freed entirely from the historical context. Among his writings of recent years, his chapter in the volume commemorating William James represents, perhaps, the best example of a sustained use of the analytic method. Edwin B. Holt, who has himself made classical contributions to philosophy and psychology, has written of this chapter:

> I think it very fine, perhaps the best article on James's epistemology. Brett is very searching, and without a trace of malice he sets in high relief the most fundamental, and in my opinion the weakest, point about James. James *was*, in his deepest depth, a subjectivist. He had many leanings in an opposite direction, but they were not so deeply ingrained. And James never found a synthesis that could reconcile these conflicting motives. He sought refuge in Shadworth Hodgson's "double-barrelled" (i.e., evasive) term "experience"; this obscured but in no whit solved the problem. Brett formidably marshals the evidence that "the rather ill-fated doctrine of 'the will to believe' " and kindred errors *are* the epistemological James. And profoundly as I cared for James, I must admit that Brett is right.

Such is the tribute of a man who is well known as one of the most critical minds of the age. Finally, Brett's students everywhere will wish to know that the manuscripts on which he was working at the time of his death show once again that he was not only a learned historian but an acute, and a great, philosopher.

IV

Whether one considers his teaching or his writings, Brett's achievement was characterized by a profound and comprehensive scholarship, an unceasing use of the historical method, and an abiding confidence in the function of reason. It was his conviction, as it was that of Hegel before him, that comprehensiveness is essential in philosophy.

> This comprehensiveness makes greatness: through it a man may be the spectator of all times and places. But he must not hope to gain this comprehensive outlook by occupying one solitary peak: he must not flatter himself that there is an essence of all essences, that he can condense all life and thought into one magic drop. On the contrary he must keep the original wealth of material undiminished if he would have a world in which "life's garden blows;" if he abstracts and simplifies, the product is an "essence," a drop of scent in place of the living flower."[22]

Such was the ideal which the young man of twenty-nine set before himself in the opening pages of his book on Gassendi. In the service of this ideal, he wrought in many fields: he read and mastered texts in many languages in many periods of history; he made vast contributions not only to philosophy and psychology, but also to science, literature, politics, and religion. He attained his goal, for anyone who knew his real stature realized that he had as comprehensive a mind as any other philosopher of our time, that he was easily the equal of such men as Whitehead, Dewey, or Meyerson.

Few great philosophers have held as closely as Brett to the historical point of view. What is the value of the history of philosophy? The distinguished American philosopher, Robert Scoon, has answered this question with wisdom and clarity: "The history of philosophy can become a means of acquiring ideas of universal import, understanding the process of ideas, and gaining an insight into the natural capacities of the mind .... How can the meaning of truth be appreciated except by first watching the long struggle which philosophy and science have made for it? .... Only through the history of philosophy does philosophy become conscious of itself." To Brett likewise the history of philosophy was a living body of thought. Faced with the endless procession of philosophical systems, he yielded neither to the sceptical relativism of Dilthey's *Historismus* nor to the rigorous absolutism of Husserl's *Phänomenologie*. In the history of philosophy he sought, rather, the meaning of existence for humanity. His unceasing use of the historical method must have been inspired also by a belief in the essential unity of civilization: he did much to establish that unity by exhibiting the logical and historical relationships between philosophical ideas and other great systems of ideas in science, literature, politics, and religion. In his dynamic mind the whole intellectual past of mankind seemed to live again.

During the span of Brett's life there occurred in western civilization a remarkable development of the metaphysics of the irrational. The tendency to undermine reason has, of course, been greatly encouraged both by the violence of temper which has characterized international relations in our

[22] *The Philosophy of Gassendi*, vi-vii.

time and by the widespread cultural disintegration which has accompanied the gigantic ravages of two world wars. There has also been a rapid rise of the arts of propaganda, or manipulation of public opinion by group, class, or national interests. Frank affirmations of mass-desires have replaced attempts to persuade by reasoned arguments. Within the very citadel of philosophy itself irrationalism has found powerful support among the disciples of Bergson's voluntarism, Westermarck's ethical relativism, Freud's psychology of the unconscious, and Pareto's doctrine of logical residues. Brett realized that in Canada the revolt against reason takes the form of a condemnation of logic, and an exaggerated emphasis on the value of spontaneity and of expression for its own sake: "With the distrust of reason goes a distrust of education as distinct from manual training; and finally a distrust of law, whether natural or political, as something invented by the superior person to bind with fictitious chains the unenlightened." In the perspective of a quarter of a century, perhaps Brett's greatest general contribution to Canada as a teacher and writer was his constant emphasis on the value of reason as opposed to unreason. Within the terms of the great tradition of Plato and Aristotle he showed, in an unforgettable manner, that only as men had relied on reason had they been able to conquer and liberate portions of their world. He stood like a towering rock against which the waves of twentieth-century irrationalism dashed and broke.

Brett now belongs to all that past of humanity which his life's work has made so much more significant, not only for his own generation but also for future times. For future times? Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht. As I leave him to the long judgment of history, I can find no better word to express my own deep sorrow at the untimely loss of a good friend and a great teacher than the sad Kwakiutl verb wibālisEm—*to perish without reaching the end.*

CHECK-LIST OF WRITINGS*

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THE SECOND BIRTH OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL

LIONEL STEVENSON

IN literary history the basic processes of life figure as significantly as in the biographies of individuals. The births, matings, and deaths of literary genera have the valid dramatic qualities of suspense, surprise, conflict, and sometimes irony. The onlooker can feel a morbid sympathy with the long death-agonies of such a once-noble type as the epic or the metrical romance; he can sentimentally applaud the congenial marriage of English tragedy with blank verse in 1560 and can as sentimentally deplore its seduction by a light o' love, the heroic couplet, a century later; but perhaps more gratifying than either of these is to contemplate the birth of some promising infant which (as we are comfortably aware through the possession of hindsight) will grow into a sturdy new genus of literature.

Only rarely can the last-mentioned occurrence be spied upon, for most of the principal literary types were gestated in primitive seclusion, before written record. The most influential form of modern literature, however, —the novel—came into the world comparatively lately; and so the slow and fumbling process of its conception and delivery can be traced *ab ovo*.

The obstetrical analogy must here be relinquished. The early career of the English novel displays a phenomenon such as is not recorded of any individual in human history or legend, since even the "brave infant of Saguntum" did not venture upon a second nativity after its fabulous gesture of escapism. Propitiously born in the middle years of the eighteenth century, the English novel was ruthlessly exposed a few decades later to such a radical change in the atmosphere of the contemporary mind that it disintegrated into the several components from which it had so recently been created. The present-day reader, familiar with the lusty later career in the nineteenth century, is apt to assume a normal continuity from the first epoch to the second, and to accept evidence of that continuity in the persons of two or three authors who were unquestionably producing good novels during the intervening fifty years. The literary histories, even Dr. Edward Wagenknecht's recent and excellent *Cavalcade of the English Novel*, being preoccupied with those few handsome trees, fail to indicate the absence of any environing forest. As a matter of fact, those two or three authors were so exceptional that their significance was misconstrued in their own generation, and after 1830 the novel had to be discovered all over again.

In its first incarnation, the English novel was the end-product of tendencies that had prevailed during the whole neo-classical century. It can now be recognized as the greatest and most lasting achievement of that era, but, being unprecedented, it had to emerge slowly and unperceived. The major accepted vehicles of the Augustan age—the comedy of manners, the

allegorical satire in verse or prose, the scientific treatise masquerading as poetry by virtue of rhyming couplets and copious metaphor—all were traditional forms, inadequate for the new *Zeitgeist*.

Various influences have been listed as contributing to the literary mood of the Augustan age in England—revulsion from Puritan restraints, suspicion of earnestness and enthusiasm, adoption of French fashions, political partisanship; but more decisive than all these was the fact that creative literature had at last fallen under the control of scientific thinking, with its objective accuracy and its inductive insistence upon detailed evidence. In this sense, the true begetter of the English novel was Francis Bacon; and his essays, for all their abstractness, were a notebook full of psychological jottings in which lurked the rudiments of a great work of fiction.

Even in Bacon's primary field, physical science, it was not until half a century later that his principles were fruitfully applied, and so it is not remarkable that more than a hundred years elapsed before his influence upon literature had its full embodiment in a suitable form. In the interval the reading public was vastly extended and the book-distributing trades were commensurately developed. The new profession of journalism familiarized both readers and writers with the virtues of clear, matter-of-fact, prose narrative. As a result, from the beginning of the eighteenth century all the essential materials of the novel were present in disparate fragments. The Roger de Coverley papers were seven characters in search of a plot. Defoe's fictional reconstruction of the plague year was a setting without either plot or characters, and his more personalized narratives, even the great *Crusoe* itself, were still in the hinterland of journalistic reporting, with characterization and structure in a rudimentary stage.

Although the final synthesis was accidental, the pioneers were prompt in recognizing their discoveries. By the time Richardson had fumbled his way from the *Letters on the Most Important Occasions* to *Pamela* he was aware that he had created a new kind of masterpiece; and the public raptures confirmed his assurance. Similarly, as Fielding's burlesque of the Richardsonian *bourgeois* morality began to grow and change and palpitate with life, the author not only gave the characters free rein to develop into sympathetic lifelikeness, but also indulged in many amazed but discerning comments upon his "comic prose epic." In their subsequent books, therefore, both men moved with the assured mastery of a new art. And their success ensured its adoption by other writers of diversified stripes. Dr. Goldsmith demonstrated that a novel could be produced by an erratic genius; Dr. Smollett, that a batch could be produced by an energetic hack; Miss Burney, that a few could be produced by a witty young lady.

Then it all stopped. After flourishing for forty years, the novel as a vehicle for first-rate creation died with the era that gave it birth. Plenty of mediocre writers continued to use—and disfigure—the fictitious prose narrative, but authors of distinction became totally blind to its existence. The premonitory symptom of deterioration was *Tristram Shandy*, that

chimera of a novel which was in truth a reversion to the discursive essays and character-sketches which had paved the way toward the novel half a century before.

After a hundred years of ascendancy, the scientific spirit of rationalism and objective precision had become too restrictive to be endured. The imaginative and emotional functions exploded in pinwheels of fantasy and self-expression. The dispassionate analysis of social phenomena was broken up by a motley parade of carnival rioters. In swarmed an Ayrshire plowman shouting lyrics of love, liberty, and liquor; the elegant master of Strawberry Hill clanking in a rusty suit of armour; a little boy from Bristol tripping over the trailing skirts of a monkish robe; a schoolmaster from Inverness brandishing an ancient harp and clasping a sagging set of false whiskers to his respectable chops. How could any cool and gradual contemplation of human nature survive in the tumult of such lunatics?

Deserted by any competent defenders, prose fiction was taken captive by the barbarians. For a generation it was the slave of two prevailing crazes—Gothic medievalism and political radicalism. The former stripped it of plausibility and characterization, the latter manacled it with didactic dogmas. The resulting products are labeled "novels" only because librarians have no other classification for long prose fictions.

The three authors who continued to write good novels maintaining the old tradition were people who chanced to be living in extensions of the eighteenth century. Two of them were genteel spinsters, such as are always apt to be upholders of outmoded customs. Besides, Maria Edgeworth was domiciled in one of those old Irish estates that remained in the eighteenth century until they were wrecked in the "troubles" of the nineteen-twenties; Jane Austen was domiciled in Bath and Winchester, which remained placidly in the eighteenth century till the blitzes of 1940. Walter Scott, a Tory of the huntin' and drinkin' school that is never susceptible to vicissitudes of ideas, would not have been an author at all if his superabundant energies had not been diverted from normal channels by his early illness and subsequent lameness, and would never have turned from poetry to the disreputable job of novel-writing if he had not been driven by the painful necessity of paying his bills. In doing so, he took fantastic precautions to ensure that his poetic fame should suffer no contamination from his mercenary liaison with prose fiction.

Scott himself was vaguely aware that his novels somehow resembled Smollett's, but it is only to the modern critic that they reveal any distinct affinity with the realistic works of the preceding century. To his contemporaries, his greatness was not in the true and humorous characterizations, the accurate portrayal of recent Scottish life in *The Antiquary* or *The Heart of Midlothian;* to them it was in the "Gadzooks" dialogue and the disguises and lost causes and blackavized villainy of *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* and *Rob Roy*.

Of the major romantic authors, Scott was the only one who wrote

novels because he was the only one who could look at the world objectively. Each of the others tried to write a play, because plays had been the major works of great poets in the Elizabethan age, and they all failed egregiously to master the objective necessities of characterization and action. Not one of them ever dreamed of starting to write a novel. Shelley came nearest to it, with his schoolboy tales of terror—just as it was the same ether-ranging Shelley, paradoxically, who came nearest to dramatic effectiveness with his morbid Websterian tragedy. The prose writers, moreover, were as inhibited from fiction as the poets. Lamb, who showed skill in characterization as long as he stayed with his personal reminiscences in desultory essays, lost every vestige of that ability as soon as he undertook a sustained story, *Rosamund Gray*. Hazlitt, De Quincey, and the other essayists did not even attempt one.

In consequence of the disintegration of the novel, all sorts of queer quasi-fiction throve rankly. In such forms, authors could gratify subjective impulses to promulgate their own opinions (or prejudices) and to parade their own emotions, while at the same time making some contact with the reader's persistent preference for variety of characterization. As long as the authors felt free of any responsibility of providing an integrated structure that might eventually hamper the fine careless rapture of their utterance, they could portray human nature plausibly enough. There was a wide vogue for plotless segments of conversation, ranging from the chiseled *Imaginary Conversations* of Landor to the interminable tipsy *Noctes Ambrosianae* in *Blackwood's Magazine* and the still more rowdy imitations of them in *Fraser's*. The device of inventing fictitious characters to lend colour to expository discourses spread from these editorial symposia into the work of other contributors. In *Fraser's Magazine* the most remarkable instance was *Sartor Resartus*, with Carlyle's laborious creation of Dr. Teufelsdröckh, who baffles the modern reader by doing absolutely nothing, once he has been created.

When such character studies degenerated to the level of caricature they sometimes attained vast popularity, as in the *Ramsbottom Papers* by Theodore Hook and *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures* by Douglas Jerrold. At the other extreme, when an author's subject-matter was inherently serious, the fictitious embroidery merely confused the average reader by raising doubts as to whether the whole thing might be an elaborate hoax. *Sartor Resartus* certainly provoked this response, and so did *The Doctor*, Robert Southey's anonymous and anomalous "story without a plot."

After 1820 the orgy of subjectivity was wearing itself out, and a few authors began to rub their eyes and gaze with new curiosity and new amusement at the vagaries of the human species. Inevitably the novel would be used once more as the vehicle of this re-awakened interest, but in order to be available for the purpose it had to be dissociated from the conventions that had battened upon prose fiction during the preceding forty years. Nominally, the promising young novelists in 1830 were

G. P. R. James and Harrison Ainsworth, who ignored all that was realistic and humorous and psychologically sound in Scott's novels and exaggerated all his fustian. Actually, the genuine traits of the novel were being discovered all over again by less cocksure authors, using the trial-and-error method.

Premonitory of the change were the discursive satires of Thomas Love Peacock, which in many respects were as remote from the novel as were the *Noctes Ambrosianae* or *Sartor Resartus*. Peacock's characters have been variously identified as "embodied idiosyncrasies" and as burlesques upon individual contemporaries; their interminable debates dilated upon all philosophy and all social phenomena, great and small. But Peacock had enough conception of the novel as an artistic form to tie each batch of verbose caricatures together with some sort of haphazard, intermittent plot, and for this reason his books, like *Tristram Shandy*, are accorded the courtesy title of "novels."

A little later than Peacock, two or three other writers employed the same device of fabricating a perfunctory plot in order to unify comments on current foibles which otherwise might have formed a series of familiar essays. As far as characterization was concerned, they created fictitious personages chiefly to evade the law of libel, since much of the public interest was aroused by well-planted rumours that the novels were *romans à clef*. Because both Disraeli and Bulwer later became distinguished novelists, it is customary to classify *Vivian Grey* and *Pelham* as their first novels, with the implication that these employed the same techniques as the later *Coningsby* and *The Caxtons*. More properly, *Vivian Grey* and *Pelham* can be called "protonovels." In each of them, the author himself served as the model for the central character as brazenly as in Byron's poems, and in other respects also both books derived from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan* more than from any previous works of prose fiction. From the experience of writing them, however, and from the public response, both authors began to discover that their own potentialities extended beyond the publicizing of their callow opinions and affectations. In the two books there had been abrupt unassimilated melodramatic episodes that tempted the young writers into undertaking more exciting narrative and more passionate love-stories. Disraeli occupied nearly five years in making the transition from *Vivian Grey* to his next novel. Bulwer marked the change in another way, by his quick shift from discursive "society novels" to "shockers" of underworld violence.

Upon a lower rung of the social ladder, less elegant authors were producing protonovels of essentially the same type. One of the most neglected masterpieces of popular literature of the twenties is Pierce Egan's *Life in London, or The Day and Night Scenes of Jerry Hawthorne, Esq., and his Elegant Friend Corinthian Tom*. As strictly masculine fiction, taboo in the boudoir, it harked back to the Fielding-Smollett tradition. Better known to modern readers is *The Jaunts and Jollities of . . . Mr. John Jorrocks*, by R. S. Surtees. The plural titles of these books are a sufficient clue to

their essentially unorganized, picaresque character. The authors wrote them as disjointed episodes, to be published serially, and with no more continuity of plot toward an eventual climax than in the modern comic-strip. A still more notable instance is *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*, which Charles Lever began writing for the *Dublin University Magazine* without the faintest intention of constructing a long unified story. As the series progressed a makeshift plot was superimposed upon the bagful of anecdotes.

Such was the anomalous state of English prose fiction in the middle of the eighteen-thirties, when Charles Dickens escaped from an attorney's office and qualified as a newspaper reporter. To use up his excess of verbal energy and to enhance his scanty income he began to write brief character-studies, place-descriptions, and narratives; these were printed in the cheaper magazines and in the extra columns of the *Morning Chronicle*. Comedy occupied many of them, pathos a few; some were straight factual reporting and word-pictures.

The immediate literary ancestors of these pieces were obviously the essays of the "Cockney" school—Lamb, Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt. In place of the subtly natural style of those masters of familiar prose, Dickens substituted a broader caricature touch that was appreciated by the readers of the periodicals he wrote for. Completely in the accepted manner, he adopted a pseudonym to rank with "Elia" and "Christopher North" and "Father Prout." As he gained confidence he would in all probability have built up a fictitious biography for "Boz" as those other essayists did for their pseudonymous shadows.

Although in his boyhood Dickens had read and enjoyed *Don Quixote*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tom Jones*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and the novels of Smollett, he never thought of them as providing a possible model for a type of writing that could be profitably produced in his own day. And when the firm of Chapman & Hall engaged the comic artist Robert Seymour to supply a series of prints representing the absurd misadventures of a band of Cockney would-be sportsmen, it was merely an afterthought to link them together with a trickle of letter-press. Because the writer was to be so subservient to the artist, the publishers sought out the previously-unidentified "Boz" rather than engage an author of recognized standing. The suicide of Seymour, however, at an early stage in the production, caused a complete change in the emphasis. As no other popular artist would be likely to consent to inherit a rival's enterprise, the publishers had to protect their initial investment by hiring an obscure beginner, Hablôt Browne. Dickens suddenly found himself promoted from underling to master, free to invent episodes as he chose.

Even so, the opening instalments of *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* were as disjointed as the plural title indicated. The method of publication in monthly parts precluded any envisioning of a coherent story. Dickens himself stated these facts plainly in the preface to a subsequent edition:

> It was observed, in the Preface to the original Edition . . . that no ingenuity of plot was attempted, or even at that time considered very feasible by the author in connection with the desultory mode of publication adopted; and that the machinery of the Club, proving cumbrous in the management, was gradually abandoned as the work progressed . . . . I was a young man of two or three-and-twenty when Messrs. Chapman and Hall . . . waited upon me to propose a something that should be published in shilling numbers . . . . The idea propounded to me, was, that the monthly something should be a vehicle for certain plates to be executed by Mr. Seymour . . . .

Long before he had finished writing the twenty "monthly somethings" Dickens grew aware of what he was doing, precisely as had been the experience of Richardson and Fielding a century before. Like them, he found himself making two changes that affected the very essence of his material: (*a*) he transformed his main characters from marionettes to plausible and lovable persons, and (*b*) he tardily introduced a plot. As with Richardson and Fielding, too, his discovery that he was writing a novel was attended by the discovery that the public adored it and was ready to pay lavishly for such entertainment. From that moment, Dickens was a novelist.

While the later monthly instalments of *Pickwick* were still being written, he started upon a successor. Now that his eyes had been opened he recognized that the books of certain successful contemporaries were novels, too. Rather than attempt a second work in the spontaneous vein of *Pickwick*, he went to the other extreme, and consciously adopted the traits of a type of novel that was already a best-seller. Therefore *Oliver Twist* was equipped with the grimness, the underworld slang, and the sanguinary climax that had popularized the crime-stories of Bulwer and Ainsworth. In thus copying an established model, Dickens learned much about the technique of fiction, and by the time he went on to his third novel he had evolved a method which suited himself.

Just the same progression to organized construction was followed by other authors who had started blindly with "monthly somethings." Surtees went on from *Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities* to *Handley Cross*, Lever from *Harry Lorrequer* to *Charles O'Malley*. By 1840, therefore, it ought to have been obvious that the English novel had been reborn in viable condition, and that for any writer competent to create plausible characters it was the surest way to fortune.

Nevertheless, one man ordained for pre-eminence in fiction remained obstinately blind to his potentialities for a decade. Under stress of sudden poverty William Makepeace Thackeray turned professional author just at the moment when Dickens was starting to publish *Pickwick*. Thackeray was ready to undertake any sort of writing that would keep the wolf from the door. And yet he went through the long slow process of discovering the novel for himself, as if no one else were writing anything of the sort.

He began with magazine sketches that followed the desultory tradition of the familiar essay. Fictitious characters were invented for ulterior purposes. The sententious footman, Charles James Yellowplush, came into existence as a vehicle for satire upon contemporary snobbery. The gossiping little artist, Michael Angelo Titmarsh, was created as a pseudony-

mous personality for the author's criticisms of literature and art. Through both masks he occasionally wrote fictitious narrative, but these short stories (as they would now be called) were never clearly segregated from the non-narrative essays. *The Yellowplush Papers*, for instance, in addition to the review of Skelton's *Anatomy of Conduct* which was the original motive for the invention of the footman, included three other literary skits, one short story, and a picaresque series of exploits of Mr. Deuceace which was split for no very adequate reason into three sections. Another magazine series, in which Thackeray restricted himself more consistently to narration, was *Some Passages in the Life of Major Gahagan;* but these were disjointed episodes, as the title indicated, and were a wild burlesque upon military reminiscences, with no pretension to realism.

In 1839 Thackeray very nearly wandered into novel-writing by the path that Fielding had followed. Disgusted with the popular enthusiasm for the Bulwer-Ainsworth romances of the underworld, with their morbidly sentimental gloating over crime, he undertook to destroy them with a burlesque, just as Fielding had intended to demolish *Pamela*. Thackeray's story, too, was soon in the predicament of *Joseph Andrews:* the characters threatened to come to life and run away with the theme. But Thackeray was more stubborn than Fielding. He fought against his own creations, and foreshortened his tale rather than let it develop. Accordingly *Catherine* remained unsatisfactory to its author and everyone else. He had intended to reveal the inherent falsity of the "Newgate Calendar" stories by presenting an unsparingly sordid portrayal of what criminals were really like. The more savagely he carried out its Defoe-like realism, the less valid became its critical function of satire, and the more painfully he was torn between the desire to blacken the picture and the temptation to humanize the characters. "It is a disgusting subject and no mistake," he remarked soon after it began to appear; "I wish I had taken a pleasanter one." A few months later, however, after its hasty conclusion, he expressed an opposite view: "It was not made disgusting enough . . . . The triumph of it would have been to make readers so horribly horrified as to cause them to give up or rather throw up the book and all its kind; whereas you see the author had a sneaking kindness for his heroine, and did not like to make her quite worthless."

His next gesture toward the writing of a novel was ruined by extraneous disaster. *A Shabby Genteel Story* was to deal with contemporary life on the social level usually depicted by Dickens. In spite of the author's violently sarcastic attitude, it showed signs of developing into a convincing piece of fiction; but after only four instalments had appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* the family life of Thackeray was devastated by the mental collapse of his wife, and continuance of the novel proved impossible.

A year later financial compulsion drove him once again to start a magazine serial, *The History of Samuel Titmarsh and the Great Hoggarty Diamond.* Affliction having tempered his intolerance, the story had some pathos mingled with its irony, but Thackeray handled it awkwardly by dragging

in the old *alter ego* of his critical essays, Michael Angelo Titmarsh, to act as narrator. Readers of the magazine did not care for it, and it was terminated at the thirteenth chapter. With a total length of some 45,000 words, it could not count as a novel in comparison with the behemoths of the time.

At this juncture a group of his friends founded *Punch* and persuaded him to join the contributing staff. From week to week he dissipated his talents in burlesque and squibs, leading eventually to his great series of *The Snobs of England*, which harked back to the technique of the Theophrastian "Characters" of the seventeenth century.

Meanwhile, still tormented by the unsolved problems that had handicapped his *Catherine*, he tried similar material in *Barry Lyndon*, and succeeded this time in delineating rascals who were acceptably human and almost likable. Yet the story was not a success. Aware by this time that his objectives in fiction resembled those of the eighteenth-century novelists, he wrote in an elaborate *pastiche* of Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*. In so doing he fell into the same error as the romantic poets who tried to revive the greatness of the English drama with slavish imitations of Shakespeare. *Barry Lyndon* was so ingenious a specimen of the "fake antique" that it lacked significance for the era in which it was written. Thackeray soon lost all creative enthusiasm for it, and his diary reveals the weary effort with which he manufactured the later chapters.

After no less than four failures, he was very cautious when he next undertook anything that might develop into a novel. For the first time, his work was going to be published in monthly parts, the *format* that had become identified with Dickens, Lever, and other popular novelists. When (after much pondering) he thought of the title *Vanity Fair*, it was a safely inclusive phrase that suggested a rambling inspection of contemporary life rather than a story restricted to a few characters. To imply that the letter-press should be regarded as commentary to accompany his own caricatures, he described the work on the cover of each monthly part as "Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society." If he found himself again unable to sustain a narrative on the grand scale, he could lapse into separate essays like his *Book of Snobs*. But by the time he had brought Becky Sharp out of Miss Pinkerton's school and into the bosom of the Sedleys, he knew that at last he had created characters who drew the breath of life. When the story was reissued in volumes it bore the triumphant sub-title, "A Novel without a Hero." Only then did the English novel regain the full identity that it had enjoyed in *Tom Jones* and *Clarissa*.

In its process of rebirth, it had not sprung fully equipped from the cranium of any single author. In 1826, Pierce Egan was in the midst of his *Life in London* and Disraeli was beginning *Vivian Grey*. In 1836, Dickens undertook the *Pickwick* serial. In 1846, Thackeray was writing the opening chapters of *Vanity Fair*. Twenty years of diversified trial-and-error had been required to endow the English novel with the vitality and confidence, the truth of characterization and the architectonic structure, which it had possessed during its first incarnation, more than half a century before.

SOME MODERN GUIDES TO FAITH

William Robbins

IN G. B. Stern's latest book, *Another Part of the Forest*, there is described an incident in the bombing of London, in which a man whose home is literally blasted to bits by a flying bomb emerges dazed from the wreckage with an alarm-clock clutched in his hand. In the midst of shattering loss, he is at least determined to arrive at his (hypothetical) office on time. Such an irrational clinging to fixed routine might be described, under the circumstances, as an act of pure faith.

This desperate clinging to some kind of certainty suggests that the attitude of mind we call faith is even more expressive of man's essential being than the capacity of mind we call reason. He may by his behaviour raise pragmatic doubts at times as to his right to be called a reasoning animal, but he is at all times a believing animal. This statement of course assumes a wide, possibly an infinite, range of objects of belief. A man may believe in God, or he may believe only in the remote possibility of something "turning up" in a seemingly hopeless state of affairs. He may believe in Truth, Beauty, and Goodness; or he may believe everything he reads in neon lights. He may believe only in himself. But with nothing to believe in, without a degree of faith and the degree of hope which accompanies that faith, man is reduced to the *merely* animal level of the instinctive and automatic will to live, a level at which suicide may offer itself to the conscious mind as a grimly logical solution.

The reiterated charge that this is an irreligious age must be placed in this psychological perspective. If what is meant is that there is a diminished sense of the importance of the Church in both personal and national life, and a lack of interest in, much less acceptance of, Christian dogma and doctrine, then the charge can hardly be denied. But when we turn from historical to psychological considerations, the description is seen to be misleading. The loss of the old authorities and certainties has resulted in a search, almost desperate at times, for something to believe in, some Idea less morally ambiguous than that of Progress, some redemptive force less vulnerable than the assumption of the White Man's Burden. The injunction, "Be ye not anxious," might have been addressed directly to this century. Anxiety is its keynote, anxiety which makes for partial and inadequate solutions, which in turn by their very inadequacy provoke further anxiety. It is a vicious circle. Yet the attempts are being made to escape from the circle, and in those attempts lies the essence of the religious nature of man. And the question might legitimately be asked: Is an age whose spokesmen are aware of the need for values higher and more permanent than those derived from material possessions and the claims of the individual ego less "religious" than ages when those values, proclaimed and

interpreted by a professional priesthood, too often partook of "the deep slumber of a decided opinion"? The theological frame of reference may have been shattered, but the psychological needs remain.

It would be foolish to imply that the great majority is consciously in search of a faith to replace its lost orthodoxy. Compared with the strenuous battling over religious issues in the nineteenth century, the attitude of today seems to be one of indifference. In 1874 the young scientist W. K. Clifford spoke of Christianity as "that awful plague which has destroyed two civilizations, and but barely failed to slay such promise of good as is now struggling to live among men."[1] The *Church Herald* spoke for the champions of theology with a touching obituary on John Stuart Mill: "His death is no loss to anybody . . . . The sooner those 'lights of thought' who agree with him go to the same place, the better."[2] This of course was the language of intemperate men, but it reflects the violence of the conflict between materialistic science and traditional religion. The all-or-nothing aspect of the struggle was illusory. Science won, only to find that mechanistic laws of nature did not explain everything about man.[3] Religion lost, only to find that it had been stoutly defending a line of obsolete fortifications long since by-passed by the enemy. The real problem of the nature of man remains, and today the disappearance of the lines of demarcation has gone so far that we have Whitehead writing serious and influential books on God and religion and Christian doctrine, while Reinhold Niebuhr, in his theological essays, applies to ethical values and religious development the language of relativity and evolutionary theory. This more fluid and complex situation may help to explain the seeming indifference of the majority. The need and the longing are there, but the obvious truth is that there is now no authoritative body of teaching, sufficiently simplified, morally compelling, having a spiritual centre, to claim universal allegiance and to serve as the basis for a practical way of life.

The position of the average intelligent and educated man of today may be simply stated. He has long ago lost his unquestioning acceptance of the religion of the Churches, since critical scholarship and sceptical science have made of the Bible a fallible human document, a repository in part of myth and allegory. He cannot find a substitute in science itself, since he is told that science is "morally neutral," and he can see for himself the Frankenstein possibilities. He supports social reform, but he knows that the highest standard of living will not in itself satisfy his restless idealism. Finally, he has lost the buoyancy of that optimistic faith in human nature and in the idea of progress which has, since the renaissance, supplied a

[1]Quoted by Matthew Arnold in *God and the Bible*. See *Works* (London, 1903), VIII, xv.

[2]Cited by J. M. Robertson, *History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1929), II, 404.

[3]An excellent study of the developments in the metaphysical implications of modern science is contained in *Changing Backgrounds in Religion and Ethics*, by H. Wildon Carr (London, n.d.).

dynamic even to the religious sceptic. For he has come to see that progress *is* an idea, not a law of nature, and that *human* nature, freed from restraint and allowed to develop unchecked, is not necessarily productive of good. In short, he has made two rather disconcerting discoveries: (1) that no political, social, or economic scheme, unless it exhibits transcendent and unworldly values, can be an object of faith, and (2) that the doctrine of original sin, far from being a piece of antiquated theology, has an element of psychological realism.

The evidence for both the anxiety and the search may be found in every kind of writer and in every idiom. We find it in writers like G. D. H. Cole and Harold Laski, who both use the word "faith" in the midst of blue-prints for the socialized state, and posit a belief in values which are moral and spiritual, rather than political or economic. We find it in the novelists, and in the public response to them. Mr. A. J. Cronin turns from the sociological novel in *The Stars Look Down* and *The Citadel* to the religious tract in *The Keys of the Kingdom* and *The Green Years*. What concerns us here is not the relative merits of these works as novels, but the change from a political and economic frame of reference to a moral and religious one. Mr. Philip Wylie publicly confesses that he has been guilty of "pot-boilers," ferociously castigates the American scene for its lack of spiritual values, in the Savonarolan *Generation of Vipers*, and continues his crusade less stridently in *Night unto Night*, where the psychiatrist is the "strange new healer," and various people exhibit in streamlined form the applicability of Christian (even of Pauline) teaching. More suavely, with his usual air of bored detachment, Mr. Somerset Maugham has the hero of *The Razor's Edge* escape the acrid and selfish futility of modern society by the teachings of Yogi, and the resultant ability to slip the chains of self by mystical immersion in the All. This brief list of recent (and best-selling) tracts for the times can, for our purpose, be extended to include Mr. Bruce Hutchison's *The Hollow Men*, in which the hero, a newspaperman of good will soured by his experiences in Ottawa and Washington, is diagnosed by his wife during one of his black moods. "You have to believe in something—I know. Something big and wonderful. The little things we believe in aren't good enough for you. The trouble with you, Les, is that you're essentially a religious guy. You have to believe in God Almighty."[4] That this colloquial description touches on the fundamental issue is suggested by a statement from Reinhold Niebuhr, a statement which admirably condenses what I have been saying up to this point. "An individual cannot bear to make himself the centre of meaning without qualification. *Inevitably he must seek support from something greater and more inclusive than himself.*"[5]

The imaginative awareness of man's plight is, of course, most concretely expressed in poetry. Whatever their individual solutions, the poets have

[4] *The Hollow Men* (Toronto, 1944), 28.

[5] *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York, 1941), I, 87. Italics mine.

focussed steadily on the bleakness of man's spiritual state, on the meaninglessness of his life in a soulless and mechanistic routine. The protest, significantly, finds its clearest expression in the traditional language of faith.

> And in cold Europe, in the middle of Autumn destruction,
> Christopher stood, his face grown lined with wincing
> In front of ignorance—"Tell the English," he shivered,
> "Man is a spirit" . . . .[6]

Auden's challenge to a materialistic society is echoed by Day Lewis, who not only tells man what he is, but what he seeks.

> You who go out alone, on tandem, or on pillion,
> Down arterial roads riding in April,
> Or sad beside lakes where hill-slopes are reflected
> Making fires of leaves, your high hopes fallen:
> Cyclists and hikers in company, day excursionists,
> Refugees from cursed towns and devastated areas;
> Know you seek a new world, a saviour to establish
> Long-lost kinship and restore the blood's fulfilment.[7]

Nor is there in their minds any doubt as to what will save man, will restore him to spiritual health. Spender speaks for all of them.

> Readers of this strange language,
> We have come at last to a country
> Where light equal, like the shine from snow, strikes all faces,
> Here you may wonder
> How it was that works, money, interest, building, could ever hide
> The palpable and obvious love of man for man.[8]

There is nothing in all this of the elect calling the sinners to salvation. These men are fellow-sufferers as well as critics and prophets. Macniece writes with honesty and nostalgia.

> The quietude of a soft wind,
> Will not rescind
> My debt to God but gentle skinned
> His finger probes, I lull myself
> In quiet in diet in riot in dreams
> In dopes in drams in drums in dreams
> Till God retire and the door shut.
> But
> Now I am left in the fire-blaze
> The peacefulness of the fire-blaze
> Will not erase
> My debts to God for his mind strays
> Over and under and all ways
> All days and always.[9]

God, love, saviour, spirit—in four poems we have the essentials of a religion, indeed, of Christianity. The meanings are not always in accordance with theological usage, it is true. But that divergence is not without precedent. What is profoundly important is that these radical

[6] As quoted in C. Day Lewis, *A Hope for Poetry* (Oxford, 1936), 29.
[7] *Ibid.*, 38. [8] *Ibid.*, 39. [9] *Ibid.*, 64.

and secular crusaders against a robot civilization employ those words and concepts which have so long expressed the highest aspirations and noblest feelings of man. The meanings may not be orthodox, but they move in the highest reaches of the human spirit, as did the definitions of Matthew Arnold when he followed Spinoza in equating God to wisdom and goodness, to moral law, to love.

To say that man is a believing animal, as I have done, is to say that he is religious by nature. Yet a plain answer to the question *What is Religion?* is disconcertingly hard to find. I stipulated a wide range of objects of belief in calling man a believing animal—I must do the same for definitions of religion. One definition which combines simplicity of utterance with practical wisdom is contained in a statement which appeared as the foreword to an annual college publication. It was one of many such forewords contributed by Mr. Percy H. Elliott, late Principal of the College in Victoria, British Columbia. A scientist by training, a humanist in outlook, an assiduous reader of philosophy and religious literature, this fine man and teacher occasionally gave aphoristic expression to the distilled wisdom born of experience, and reflection upon that experience.

> In general man can pause before action and bring alternatives and their consequences into clear light. To this extent at least he is a free moral agent and his final choice is that of his whole personality.
>
> Wholesome living, then, is determined by those greater or lesser goods in which one really believes. Now that system of values in which one believes and upon which one acts may be called one's religion.

This definition of religion as the system of values in which we believe, and upon which we act, will serve me as a starting-point from which to consider five approaches to the problem of man's relation to something, in Niebuhr's phrase, "greater and more inclusive than himself." The writers include T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley, Harold Laski, and Reinhold Niebuhr. From this sketchy survey I have deliberately omitted G. B. Shaw, who is as complacent as Francis Bacon, and much more entertaining, in taking all knowledge for his province. Mr. Shaw's prefaces on religious themes are provocative and challenging, and I pay tribute to his power of saying something stimulating on every subject. But the others deserve the chance to be heard in their particular provinces.

For T. S. Eliot the crime of modern civilization is that it lacks meaning, or spiritual significance. We "hollow men" inhabit the "cactus land," where the "stone images are raised," and when our lips would kiss, they "form prayers to broken stone." There is little point in amplifying these charges from *The Waste Land*, which elaborates the theme that we are spiritually dead, drowned in the ocean of the trivial and the transient, the commonplace and the pretentious. The reason for this condition is more interesting, and Mr. Eliot describes it in *After Strange Gods* as the "disappearance of the idea of Original Sin."

> It is in fact in moments of moral and spiritual struggle depending upon spiritual sanctions, rather than in those "bewildering minutes" in which we are all very much alike, that men and women come nearest to being real. If you do away with this struggle, and maintain that by tolerance, benevolence, inoffensiveness and a redistribution or increase of purchasing power, combined with a devotion, on the part of an élite, to Art, the world will be as good as anyone could require, then you must expect human beings to become more and more vaporous.[10]

It is clear enough from this passage what Mr. Eliot finds to be inadequate, namely: aesthetic values, social and economic reform, and the efforts of men of good will. All such activity, on the purely human level, is a "dissipation" of the spirit. The main struggle must be against "liberalism," his name for all these forces, and the outcome must be a return to "traditional wisdom." The giving full rein to human personality, a characteristic of modern liberal thinking, is a symptom of moral and spiritual decadence. This condemnation Mr. Eliot extends even to the most serious moralists (for example, George Eliot) so long as they are "eccentric." "What I have been leading up to is the following assertion: that when morals cease to be a matter of tradition and orthodoxy—that is, of the habits of the community formulated, corrected, and elevated by the continuous thought and direction of the Church—and when each man is to elaborate his own, then *personality* becomes a thing of alarming importance."[11]

Mr. Eliot has solved the problem for himself. He has turned his back on the hollow men in the waste land, and has sought refuge behind the "storied windows richly dight." How far intellectual assent to dogma and doctrine reflected emotional need is a question which has occurred to the sceptical, some of whom have responded to the move in terms not unlike those used by Matthew Arnold of Newman's conversion in 1845: "He has adopted, for the doubts and difficulties which beset men's minds today, a solution which, to speak frankly, is impossible."[12] It is not unfair, certainly, to let Mr. Eliot's own words supply us with a comment. Speaking of the respectable and popular secular movements and religions of humanism, all "cheerfully plodding the road from nowhere to nowhere," he says: "These changed conditions are so prevalent that anyone who has been moving among intellectual circles and comes to the Church, may experience an odd and rather exhilarating feeling of isolation."[13] The intellectual finds the intelligentsia arid, and moves to the splendid isolation of the Church! That may be a prescription for the salvation of one fastidious soul, but it is not likely to be the basis for a revitalized faith. It may be compatible with an intellectual adherence to Christian doctrine, but it hardly suggests a spiritual submission to the teachings of Christ.

When we turn to Aldous Huxley, the pungent satirist on the decadence between the wars, who has more recently shown himself for what he is, one

[10] *After Strange Gods* (London, 1934), 42.
[11] *Ibid.*, 54.
[12] *Works*, IV, 349.
[13] *Selected Essays* (London, 1932), 359.

of the most severe moralists of our age, we find again a dualism of outlook and a pessimistic regard for human nature, though the solution is quite different from that of T. S. Eliot. Huxley's last three novels show this clearly, but I shall confine myself to the most explicit character, Mr. Propter in *After Many a Summer*. Huxley's technique is simple. He combines a satirical study of the sordidness and futility of life lived at the purely human level and a rather sketchy portrait of a philosophical commentator who serves as a vehicle for his own ideas. It is something like attending a well-conducted seminar in biology: the lecturer expounds the theory and the specimens are before your eyes for the practical application.

Mr. Propter considers that only evil is possible at the strictly human level of being, the level conditioned by time. He does not mean merely the obvious forms of evil—lust, cruelty, selfish exploitation—which are at least recognized by everyone. He includes all human ideals, which, because they are projections of the human ego on a larger scale, partake of human weakness and partiality. He shatters the faith of the young scientist Peter Boone, who had fought for the Loyalists in Spain, by insisting that even science and socialism are not good enough, because humanity is not good enough. His solution is compounded of two elements. We must recognize the claims of humanity by obeying the calls upon our own humanity. Mr. Propter does this by building and furnishing cabins for "Okies" out of his modest resources. But humanitarianism will not save the soul. Salvation can only be attained by an "actualization of the more-than-personal consciousness," a formidable abstraction which is elsewhere expressed as a "transcending of personality," until we achieve a "blissful freedom" from this human level of "busy nothingness." On this level of "timeless good," of "psychological eternity," the highest and only meaningful ideal will be attained in the *liberation of the ego*, a liberation from wants, cravings, loyalties, and "practical" operations. Here only is the true freedom to be realized, on this level of the soul and God, where the real *order*, the law of the nature of things, is reflected. The God is not personal; the Church is not his medium. To go above, we must first go within. The method is meditation and contemplation, and the verification comes by experiment. The religion is not mystical (as it is in the case of Maugham's hero) since there is no loss of identity, no merging into the All or the Infinite. But it is psychological and individual, and verifies itself in what Propter calls "a felt capacity for peace and purity."

In Mr. Huxley's latest novel, *Time Must Have a Stop*, the young aesthete Sebastian is heading for the same hell of spiritual nothingness that had been the fate of his sensual uncle Eustace, when the dying Bruno, a later edition of Mr. Propter, saves him by defining the "one effectively redemptive sacrifice, the sacrifice of self-will to make room for the knowledge of God." (Sebastian later, writing a book in the middle of the London blitz, describes aestheticism and sensuality as "a process of God-proofing," a kind of spiritual mackintosh, "guaranteed God-proof.") Only by attaining freedom

from self and time can life have meaning. Nor is this to be only for the individual in isolation—it must be a religion. "The fact remains that a shared theology is one of the indispensable conditions of peace. For obvious and odious historical reasons, the Asiatic majority will not accept Christianity. Nor can it be expected that Europeans and Americans will swallow the whole of Brahmanism, say, or Buddhism. But the Minimum Working Hypothesis is also the Highest Common Factor."[14] On this transcendent level of shared moral and spiritual values, people will "touch at spiritual points." And pity will be something more than "an emotional and visceral disturbance": it will be "pity informed by principle, enlightened by insight into the nature of the world, aware of the causes of suffering and the only remedy."[15] Huxley himself poses the inevitable question: How is this theorizing to work in practice? One of Mr. Propter's charges is a transient from Kansas—angry, beaten, suspicious—taking out his helpless rage on his starving family. "Mr. Propter sadly shook his head. Everything was against the poor fellow—his fundamental orthodoxy, his wounded and inflamed egotism, his nervous irritability, his low intelligence. The first three disadvantages might perhaps be removed. But could anything be done about the fourth?"[16] Nor is it merely a matter of intelligence. With the able young socially-minded scientist, Peter Boone, there is the almost impossible task of breaking down the firmly-fixed pattern of imperfect human loyalties. And most people are related to the man from Kansas, or to Peter Boone, or to both. Yet the difficulties do not mitigate the austere truth that there is no good in life, no meaning to life, unless the human level is transcended. "We have to choose between almost insuperable difficulties on the one hand and absolutely certain misery and frustration on the other. Meanwhile the general hypothesis remains as the intellectual key to history."[17]

Harold Laski and Julian Huxley may be described, in contrast to the two writers already discussed, as fundamentally optimistic in outlook and committed to a search for values at the human level. A new era of happiness is possible to man, if he will profit by the mistakes and free himself from the shackles of the past. The guiding light will be that of reason, since there is no higher authority; the method will be that of science, which has truth for its goal. Each recognizes the urge to believe, and offers to individual man "a faith in something larger and more inclusive than himself."

In *Faith, Reason and Civilization*, Mr. Laski draws a parallel between communism and early Christianity. The central fact in the triumph of Christianity during three centuries of struggle was "the recovery by man of faith in himself. The result, in the long run, was to create an atmosphere

[14] *Time Must Have a Stop* (New York, 1944), 299.
[15] *Ibid.*, 302.
[16] *After Many a Summer* (London, 1939), 97.
[17] *Ibid.*, 286.

of hope instead of despair, of effort instead of resignation. The victory of Christianity over paganism meant a revitalization of the human mind."[18] But several developments have made it unlikely that Christianity can have the same power of affirming and revitalizing today: the loss of belief in the supernatural, the critical attitude toward miracles and special evidences as merely unhistorical matters, and, most decisive of all, the proven historical tendency of organized Christianity to ally itself with existing power in order to maintain the *status quo*, for instance in the Spanish Civil War. Christianity as a religion may still be conducive to individual happiness, but as a church it is an anachronism. For the problem of our civilization is that of *collective* happiness, in a society which can instil faith by evoking a dream of freedom in its citizens. The way of life is an economic humanism which, by scientific mastery of nature, can realize a set of external circumstances for the masses of its citizens favourable to their complete inner fulfilment. Now the only modern idea which will supply the vitality, the *dynamic*, to use Mr. Laski's favourite word, is the communist idea. I shall quote the passages in which Mr. Laski makes his claim for communism as a faith.

> What it is urgent, therefore, for us to understand is that the Russian revolutionary idea meets the two supreme tests which any faith must be able to meet which hopes to achieve a regeneration of civilized values. It must be a source of strength in adversity to those who accept it; and it must seem not less vital after it has gone well on the way of its regenerating mission than it did when it was able to attract a poor handful of brave acolytes . . . . The Russian Revolution . . . has evoked a religion of service to the community which has elevated the men and women who compose it. It possesses that magic power which, with most of us, only great danger has seemed able to evoke, the power of living to an end greater than a merely private end.[19]

We may notice here the stress upon the *idea*; Mr. Laski disapproves of some of the immediate practical applications. Yet here only is the new gospel, which will recognize not only man's need for bread, but also the fact that he cannot live by bread alone. We are at the same time warned against the deification of the state. In seeking something larger than the individual ego, Laski protests that he does not envisage merely a larger mechanical unit, for we cannot "escape the moral responsibility of personal decision." The framework may be economic and social, but the values are moral and spiritual.

> Faith in one's nation is not enough. That is partly because scientific discovery has made the national idea in large part obsolete in matters of economic and political concern; but it is partly, also, because no faith can create in the individual the kind of values we require if he surrenders his judgment to the keeping of any organization, be it nation or Church or party. Every one of us has one obligation which goes deeper than the obligation we owe to the collective relations in which the fact of community life involves us; that obligation is to that inner self in each one of us which we can never yield to anyone's keeping without ceasing to be true to our dignity as human beings. The faith, therefore, that puts the nation first is inadequate unless it is prepared to sit in judgment upon the acts that are done in the nation's name. To rejoice in victory as such is never enough; it is imperative

[18] *Faith, Reason and Civilization* (New York, 1944), 27. [19] *Ibid.*, 54.

to be sure, as an individual citizen, that the victory is for a cause one's inner self approves. For a faith that is built upon a service that is mechanical and not dynamic, while it may contribute to the power it serves, contributes blindly and without that intimate understanding which alone enables faith to create values which can endure.[20]

Like the economic humanist, the exponent of scientific humanism "looks upon man as belonging altogether to the order of nature." An excellent short exposition of this point of view may be found in an article by Max C. Otto in the *Antioch Review*. The scientific humanist is not less interested "in the human aspect of human nature because he aspires to be scientific in his thinking . . . . In spite of reiterated arguments purporting to show that the very attempt is irrational, he persists in trying to extend scientific thinking to every kind of individual and social problem."[21] The application of this method does not mean that test-tube and scales are the adequate measure of all experience. But it does mean that the scientific humanist is not going to fall into despair when he finds no Absolute Truth, and conclude that there is no truth at all. He believes that truth is relative and approximate, and he "labors to invent and put into practice better truth tests, especially in areas of human interest where the need to do this has received little attention."[22] These areas include social idealism, moral character, and religion. Nor does Professor Otto stop short of that interest in the awesome and mysterious which, he believes, differentiates religion from mere morality and gives it its emotional tone. But with the scientific humanist the response is to mystery as mystery, not to mystery as evidence for the existence of some supernatural Being or superearthly scale of values. Science, in other words, can deal with values as well as with facts, in spite of claims to the contrary by theological and idealistic critics. The search is for a good life in a good world, but the spirit is essentially religious. In the search matter and spirit, so often represented as enemies, become allies.

This summary of Professor Otto's article fairly represents Julian Huxley's thought in his *Religion without Revelation*. Huxley says further that we must believe in order to act, that there are times when we can proceed only by faith, "faith not only in the validity of our own capacity for making judgments, but also in the existence of certain outer realities, pre-eminently moral and spiritual realities."[23] We oscillate between conviction and caution, faith and agnosticism, belief and suspension of belief. What then are these realities, "larger and more inclusive," belief in which enables us to act? They are not the Christian God of T. S. Eliot, nor the selfless and timeless plane of values postulated by Aldous Huxley. They are the facts of human existence, from birth to death, they are suffering and comradeship, they are human ideals like truth and virtue and beauty, they are the forces of nature, they include the facts of the spiritual life,

[20] *Ibid.*, 33.
[21] M. C. Otto, "Scientific Humanism" (*Antioch Review*, III, 1943, 534).
[22] *Ibid.*, 536.
[23] *Religion without Revelation* (London, 1927), 28.

such as the conviction of sin and the desire for righteousness. In their relation to human destiny and against their cosmic background they may even be said to have a sacred aspect, and to arouse the sense of awe or reverence. In his *Essays of a Biologist*, Mr. Huxley tells us what he thinks of as the religious experience.

> If, therefore, we have in any true sense of the word, "found religion," it means that we shall so have organized our minds that, for flashes at least, we attain to a sense of interpenetration with the reality around us—that reality which includes not only the celestial bodies, or the rocks and waters, not only evolving life, but also other human beings, also ideas, also ideals. This, to my mind, is what actually happens when men speak of communion with God. It is an organizing of our experiences of the universe in relation with the driving forces of our soul or mental being, so that the two are united and harmonized. There is a resolution of conflicts, an attainment of a profound serenity, a conviction that the experience is of the utmost value and importance.[34]

It is impossible to do even elementary justice here to Reinhold Niebuhr's two volumes on *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, delivered as the Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh in 1939. He believes that only a revitalized Christianity can solve the problem of evil and lead man to a fuller life. He is not prophetic. He merely states that Christianity has again become relevant to an age in which the authority of natural science is going the way of the authority of the Church, an age in which proletarian disillusionment with social panaceas is likely to repeat the pattern of *bourgeois* disillusionment with liberalism. What he sets forth is a synthesis of renaissance and Reformation thought, neither optimistic nor pessimistic, neither Catholic nor Protestant. It is no metaphysical system, but an interpretation of the history and psychology of man. The *modern* philosophy of life which comes closest to a realistic appraisal of man is, he believes, Marxist communism, because of its insight into that tendency of human nature to rationalize a particular set of values, to give them universal significance. But Marxism is inadequate because it fails to apply this analysis to *all* human wishes and values. It becomes guilty of the arrogance it condemns by claiming universal validity for its own set of values. Instead of seeing in *bourgeois* and capitalist shortcomings an evidence of *human* weakness, of original sin, it sees only the evidence of *class* weakness, and uses the diagnosis as a tool of class war, in order to destroy a dominant class and to become itself dominant. Yet this short-sightedness does not invalidate the historical truth, so often touched on in the Bible, that the powerful and wealthy are (relatively) more guilty.

Niebuhr makes two great claims for Christian teaching: (1) that it gives meaning to history, and (2) that its treatment of the psychology of human nature is uniquely realistic. Religion of some kind is inevitable, because of man's spiritual stature, his capacity to transcend himself and the natural order. But a faith which has for its object either a system of

[34] *Essays of a Biologist* (London, 1923), 284. Would it be too fanciful to see here a romantic elopement of Science with Metaphysic from the stern guardianship of Theology and Epistemology?

values created by man's reason or a set of values derived from the natural force and vitality of man (that is, any form of rationalism or naturalism, the two modern alternatives) is bound to exhibit the most comprehensive sin of all, the original sin, the sin of pride. Modern religions of all kinds are, according to Niebuhr, merely self-assertion in religious disguise, including the prevailing varieties of Christianity, which are either committed to the preservation of vested privilege or submerged in social service and a social utopianism. The latest efforts to escape the limitations of man's contingent existence, such as the socialist or fascist states, exhibit *collective pride*, and can be productive of definite social and historical evil. Yet Niebuhr's appraisal does not dismiss all *isms* as equally bad. He makes a clear-cut distinction, for example, between the nature and aims of fascism and those of communism, in terms of their relative power for good and evil, just as he qualifies on a relative basis the (religious) truth that all men are sinners, in order to recognize the moral achievements of history.

The two claims made by Niebuhr for Christianity may be considered together. Ancient philosophies found no meaning in history, or at the most the limited meaning of recurring cycles, and so sought to put man in control of his destiny by using his transcendent freedom of spirit to raise him above the flux of natural things, or else they subordinated him to that flux. Modern philosophies have seen history as unified and cumulative, but have tended to find the redeeming power, the fulfilment of human life, in the historical process itself, even to the confusing of growth with progress. Now the psychological realism which Niebuhr finds in Christianity consists in recognizing that man is free in the spirit and can transcend the natural order, while at the same time he is part of that finite natural order and cannot by himself escape it. In other words, he is viewed as a totality, as he is not by the materialist and naturalist on the one hand, nor by the idealist and mystic on the other. And his destiny has meaning only in relation to a faith which finds "ultimate security beyond all the securities and insecurities of history," a faith which "may dissuade men from the idolatrous pursuit of false securities and redemptions in life and history." Yet this "eternal ground of existence," on which the love of God and the life of Christ are the redemptive forces, is "involved in man's historical striving to the point of suffering with him," and as an object of faith can teach men not to escape their historical responsibilities, but to accept them gladly. With such a faith history is not meaningless simply because it cannot complete itself, though it remains tragic in men's efforts to complete it. Niebuhr's concluding paragraph shows clearly the care he has put into his interpretation of Christian thought in order to suggest its relevance today. "Thus wisdom about our destiny is dependent upon a humble recognition of the limits of our knowledge and our power. Our most reliable understanding is the fruit of "grace" in which faith completes our

ignorance without pretending to possess its certainties as knowledge; and in which contrition mitigates our pride without destroying our hope."[25]

When we seek for the focal point in the credos considered we find it to be this—the problem of human nature, or more specifically, of the religious psychology of man. Each writer, directly or indirectly, sets forth what he thinks man *is*, in the course of constructing a system or set of values in which man may believe, and upon which he may act. And it is this basic psychological problem which constitutes, as Niebuhr sees it, the modern dilemma. The achievement of post-renaissance culture in the understanding of nature has been paralleled, he believes, by an increasing confusion with regard to human nature. The rationalists would have man free himself from the limitations of the natural order and live according to an ideal system. He must save his soul by denying his instincts and passions, or by sublimating them. The romantic naturalists would have him deny the spiritual and rational, because it is *un*natural, and live as a vital part of the natural process, following his instincts, even to recognizing his true life in the subconscious. Since these methods of "salvation" are contradictory, they furnish a comment on the inability of modern thought to solve the problem of evil. And the conflict between the forms of reason on the one hand and human vitality on the other is expressed in half-truths and a lack of unity. For the unifying power, and hence the true governing principle in man, lies in the *will*, which in turn is subject to the will of God, the *logos*, in which wisdom and will, natural and spiritual vitality, are united. This is the Christian view, which Niebuhr sets over against both major trends in modern culture.

In imaginative literature, the dilemma of modern man has nowhere been more searchingly and sympathetically stated than in Thomas Mann's novel, *The Magic Mountain*. The young engineer Hans Castorp is the very embodiment of the modern spirit. He has a dilettante's interest in art and music; he has an assured future in which he is not much interested; he is mildly sceptical, vaguely pragmatic. If he has any religion, it is that of work, for though he has no love for it, he has been brought up to have an absolute regard for its estimable quality. Then his life changes, when a visit to a sanatorium develops into the prolonged stay of the tubercular patient. His changed attitude to life reflects the influence of two men, who talk to young Hans with a pedagogue's passion and try to control the speculative and questioning turn his mind has taken. One is Settembrini, the spokesman for progress, international brotherhood, and enlightened reason. The other is Naphta the Jesuit, the exponent of medieval Catholicism and a dualistic philosophy.

To Settembrini, the centuries since the renaissance have been distinguished by the triumph over authority, by the scientific search for objective truth, by progressive enlightenment, by the achievement of

[25] *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, II, 321.

freedom, personality, and the rights of man. To Naphta these are the sentiments of empty rhetoric. Man is the measure of all things, in the sense that any science or philosophy which does not further his *spiritual* well-being, his salvation, is not worthy of the name. Knowledge is secondary to faith, since man is a creature of will, and must choose to reject knowledge that is harmful.

> Either Ptolemy and the schoolmen were right, and the world is finite in time and space, the deity is transcendent, the antithesis between God and man is sustained, and man's being is dual; from which it follows that the problem of his soul consists in the conflict between the spiritual and the material, to which all social problems are entirely secondary—and this is the only sort of individualism I can recognize as consistent—or else, on the other hand, your Renaissance astronomers hit upon the truth, and the cosmos is infinite. Then there exists no suprasensible world, no dualism; the Beyond is absorbed into the Here, the antithesis between God and nature falls; man ceases to be the theatre of a struggle between two hostile principles, and becomes harmonious and unitary, the conflict subsists merely between his individual and his collective interest; and the will of the State becomes, in good pagan wise, the law of morality. Either one thing or the other.[26]

Naphta goes on to claim that the liberalism Settembrini represents, with all its talk of freedom and the rights of man and democracy, is committed to a monetary, a capitalist standard of values, and has falsified the conflict in human nature by making man subordinate to economics and technology. The Christian centuries repudiated private property, regarded the earth as the common possession of all men, exalted the labourer above the industrialist, and made production dependent upon necessity. These principles are again being asserted, in revolutionary communism. The proletariat has taken up the religious task of freeing man from false class and economic distinctions, and is a vehicle for "the ideals of the city of God in opposition to the discredited and decadent standards of the capitalistic bourgeoisie." The revolution is the necessary Terror, the transitional phase to the re-establishment of the concepts of the two kingdoms, of God and the world, based on a conflict between the flesh and the spirit, and not merely between the individual ego and the collective will. This new Christian communism which Naphta prophesies as the ultimate outcome is to Settembrini, of course, simply a new tyranny, rejecting material progress, liberty, self-respect, the dignity of the human being, and the adequacy of the rational ideals of pure truth and pure justice. The ironical conclusion of the heated discussion is to make Settembrini appear as the conservative defender of the *status quo*, and Naphta as the radical free-thinker. And indeed, the ferocious debates of these intellectuals completely box the compass, with the noble apostle of reason and the equality of man calling the rise of the proletariat by the name of mob rule, and the man of religion calling for bloody revolution.

Hans achieves his own salvation. In imminent danger of freezing to death during a snowstorm, he has a vision of young and beautiful people behaving in a way that suggests the mythical Golden Age of antiquity, or

[26] *The Magic Mountain* (New York, 1939), 505.

the utopian dreams of William Morris. The fixed gaze of one lad reveals a temple, where Hans finds two old hags dismembering and eating a child. Awakening, Hans feels that he has glimpsed the essentials of human existence, the bliss and the terror. "I have dreamed of man's state, of his courteous and enlightened social state; behind which, in the temple, the horrible blood-sacrifice was consummated."[27] He will have none of Naphta and Settembrini, windy pedagogues, one setting up contradictions of spirit and nature, the other forever blowing on his "penny pipe of reason." For man can rise above these counter-positions, can rise above even death. And the power that enables him to do this is love.

> It is love, not reason, that is stronger than death. Only love, not reason, gives sweet thoughts. And from love and sweetness alone can form come: form and civilization, friendly, enlightened, beautiful human intercourse—always in recognition of the blood-sacrifice . . . . I will keep faith with death in my heart, yet remember that faith with death and the dead is evil, is hostile to humankind, so soon as we give it power over thought and action. *For the sake of goodness and love, man shall let death have no sovereignty over his thoughts.*[28]

This new philosophy of love Hans puts into practice when, after a spasm of jealousy, he becomes the close friend of his rival, the eccentric giant Peeperkorn. In the presence of that triumphant humanity, that aristocratic and inclusive acceptance of joy and suffering, life and death, even Naphta and Settembrini are silent. The nerve of intellectual debate is killed by the total reality of one man. Hans has no time to work out the implications of his discovery, however. He disappears from our sight into the mist of the No Man's Land of 1914, and the twentieth century writes its own comment on his search for a way of life.

From the examination of the works of these half-dozen writers, one fact stands out clearly—that is, that any system of values set up as an object of belief and a guide to living depends upon the interpretation of human nature. Religious and moral values, in other words, depend upon religious and moral psychology. And from this point of view, the retreat of T. S. Eliot from the total depravity of human nature is as unrealistic as the utopianism of a writer like H. G. Wells. We may be vile bodies and diseased wills, but we are also capable of self-sacrifice and of "the little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." Yet for an age bred in a tradition of optimistic rationalism, perhaps the most valuable reminder is that the doctrine of Original Sin is pregnant with psychological truth. Niebuhr performs a real service in bringing the doctrine, in all its historical and psychological ramifications, forcibly to our attention, and in making clear the paradox that only when man accepts realistically the potentiality for evil in himself is he able to realize something of the potentiality for good.[29]

[27] *Ibid.*, 625. [28] *Ibid.*, 626.

[29] In his *Christianity and Social Order* (Penguin Series), 39, the late Archbishop Temple realistically declared that *security* is the fundamental requirement for any political or

The first need, then, is for man to make a realistic appraisal of himself, neither trying to hoist himself above the order of nature on metaphysical stilts, nor submerging himself in the natural flux by exalting instinct and vitality over reason and spirit. For that freedom of spirit by which he transcends the level of nature is man's danger as well as his glory, when he attributes ultimate validity to the creations of his own mind, whether they be scientific laws, dogmatic religions, or economic and political theories. The scientific humanist will have no difficulty in going along with the religious psychologist in this. Yet he may very well raise a question at the first page of Niebuhr's two volumes which will qualify his response to the massive scholarship and brilliant criticism which follow. Niebuhr refers to the power by which man transcends himself, *and* the processes of his reason. But what if that transcendence, that power to achieve an Olympian view of his nature and destiny, is itself an operation of the reason?[30]

Realistic self-appraisal I have spoken of as the first necessity. The second is the consolidation of a system of belief, a kind of highest common denominator of moral and spiritual values. Can these be transcendent without being supernatural, and humanistic without lapsing into either individual anarchy or doctrinaire rigidity? Certain ideals and moral achievements have cumulative witness throughout history, and are agreed upon by civilized people. We know that peace is better than war, and that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. We see men act in corrupt and brutal mockery of these ideals and values, yet the spectacle does not cancel out the experience of mankind in developing them—it merely proves that men can be corrupt and brutal. Nor need that spectacle lead to despair. If we have been realistic about ourselves, the evolution of moral idealism is of itself an encouraging fact.

I come now to the third and most complex necessity, that of acting upon our beliefs. Here is the sphere of ethics and morality, distinct from religion but related to it. And the tremendous question arises: what is to be the moral compulsive? Is it to be inner, or outer, or both? If outer, the replacing of the fear of God by the fear of the law, the fear of hell by the fear of jail or capital punishment hardly suggests a change for the better. Indeed, there is a sense in which the fear of God is, even for the sceptical, as valid a psychological comment as the doctrine of original sin. That is, when we stand in reverent awe before that which is highest and finest in our (imaginative) experience, or when we feel shame and remorse because we have failed to meet a challenge to our better nature. I have perhaps answered my own question. Clearly, for the individual, the moral

economic system, "men being what they are." And in approaching this question: "Its assertion of Original Sin should make the Church intensely realistic, and conspicuously free from Utopianism."

[30]Niebuhr recognizes the force of this objection, and deals with it at some length in his chapter on "The Loss of the Self in Idealism" (I, 75 ff., especially 76, note 3).

compulsive, the urge "to walk by the best light we have, and to be sure that that light be not darkness," must come from within. Laws are necessary, but not as a source of salvation to the individual. And if the individual can only be in "a state of grace" by virtue of inner enlightenment, what processes, besides the "fear of God" so freely interpreted, will operate to bring about that "state of grace"? Keeping within my cautious humanistic limits, I suggest that education, at home and in the school, *could* do much, particularly to offer the young at least historical nourishment for their intuition of something "greater and more inclusive" than themselves, to clear their minds of cant and twaddle, to help them regard self-enlightenment rather than self-aggrandizement as the way to a fuller life. The criticism that this is an "idealistic" attempt to change "human nature" need not be discouragingly final. A glance from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, from Richelieu to Sir Thomas More, from Rasputin to Edith Cavell, suggests that human nature is not something to be regarded with too great pessimism, or optimism, as poured into a permanent mould.[31]

Whether the way of life sought embrace the values of a traditional or a re-interpreted Christianity, a scientific or an economic humanism, the diversity and intensity of our contemporary credos would seem to indicate that under the surface indifference of today is a sense of loss and a sense of need. The writer who turns away in disgust or is flippantly cynical will not help men to see themselves, though an angry and outrageous book like *Generation of Vipers* will shock them into awareness. But there are writers whose imaginative insight enables them to hold the mirror of thought up to this aspect of contemporary reality and to retain the image for us. One such is W. H. Auden, in his "Christmas Oratorio," *For the Time Being*, the last forty lines of which are particularly effective.

> The Christmas Feast is already a fading memory,
> And already the mind begins to be vaguely aware
> Of an unpleasant whiff of apprehension at the thought
> Of Lent and Good Friday which cannot, after all, now
> Be very far off. But, for the time being, here we all are,
> Back in the moderate Aristotelian city
> Of darning and the Eight-Fifteen, where Euclid's geometry

[31]The psychological realism of Archbishop Temple is again shown when he tells us that man's "self-centredness infects his idealism," and that "a statesman who supposes that a mass of citizens can be governed without appeal to their self-interest is living in dreamland and is a public menace. The art of Government in fact is the art of so ordering life that self-interest prompts what justice demands." His conclusion is the more striking, relieved as it is of unrealistic perfectionism. "Yet these [political] expedients are not purely prudential, and though the cynic finds plenty of material for his malicious wit, the real truth about man eludes his grasp. Man is self-centred; but he always carries with him abundant proof that this is not the real truth of his nature. He has to his credit both capacities and achievements that could never be derived from self-interest. The image of God—the image of holiness and love—is still there, though defaced; it is the source of his aspirations; it is even—through its defacement—the occasion of his perversity" (*Christianity and Social Order*, 43).

And Newton's mechanics would account for our experience,
And the kitchen table exists because I scrub it.
It seems to have shrunk during the holidays. The streets
Are much narrower than we remembered; we had forgotten
The office was as depressing as this. To those who have seen
The Child, however dimly, however incredulously,
The Time Being is, in a sense, the most trying time of all.
For the innocent children who whispered so excitedly
Outside the locked door where they knew the presents to be
Grew up when it opened. Now, recollecting that moment
We can repress the joy, but the guilt remains conscious;
Remembering the stable where for once in our lives
Everything became a You and nothing was an It.
And craving the sensation but ignoring the cause,
We look round for something, no matter what, to inhibit
Our self-reflection, and the obvious thing for that purpose
Would be some great suffering. So, once we have met the Son,
We are tempted ever after to pray to the Father;
"Lead us into temptation and evil for our sake."

They will come, all right, don't worry; probably in a form
That we do not expect, and certainly with a force
More dreadful than we can imagine. In the meantime
There are bills to be paid, machines to keep in repair,
Irregular verbs to learn, the Time Being to redeem
From insignificance. The happy morning is over,
The night of agony still to come; the time is noon:
When the Spirit must practise his scales of rejoicing
Without even a hostile audience, and the Soul endure
A silence that is neither for nor against her faith
That God's Will be done, that, in spite of her prayers,
God will cheat no one, not even the world of its triumph.

BAROQUE FORM IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

ROY DANIELLS

UNTIL recently the connotations of the word "baroque" have been almost without exception unpleasant. The *New English Dictionary* defines it as, "irregularly shaped; whimsical, grotesque, odd" and in the examples of usage we find it coupled with terms like "absurd" and "frantic." Littré, epitomizing a traditionally French hatred of the unbalanced, stigmatizes baroque as "d'une bizarrerie choquante." Roget brackets the term with "gaudy," "tawdry," "bedizened," and "flamboyant." The reason for all this is not far to seek. Baroque has meant, and for many people still means, nothing more than a questionable style of architecture, that of the Seicento. Vituperation of this architecture began early: in the introduction to Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1717) we find a sample of that unmeasured scorn which was to be poured out on the baroque for the next two centuries:

> The Italians can no more now relish the Antique Simplicity, but are entirely employed in capricious Ornaments, which must at last end in the Gothick. For Proof of this Assertion, I appeal to the Productions of the last Century. How affected and licentious are the Works of Bernini and Fontana? How wildly extravagant are the designs of Boromini, who has endeavour'd to debauch mankind with his odd and chimerical Beauties, where the Parts are without Proportion, Solids without their true Bearing, Heaps of Materials without Strength, excessive Ornament without Grace, and the Whole without Symmetry? And what can be a stronger Argument, that this excellent Art is near lost in that Country, where such Absurdities meet with Applause?

The contempt of eighteenth-century connoisseurs, under the influence of a revived taste for the "classic," is at least intelligible; it is harder to see why the nineteenth century, exalting Gothic, had not a kind word for baroque. The failure of Ruskin to recognize the style should, perhaps, be taken as a tribute to its innate subtlety and sophistication. It has remained for our own generation to attempt to do critical justice to the graphic and plastic art developed by the contemporaries of Milton and the "metaphysicals."

It is to this present century, then, and particularly to the years since the first Great War, that we must look for a saner evaluation of baroque. A work such as M. S. Briggs's *Baroque Architecture* (1913) testifies to an awakening interest, and three books on baroque art by Sacheverell Sitwell between 1924 and 1931, though critically vague, are moved by a spirit of new and genuine appreciation. More significant, perhaps, because occupied with a field in which the English genius is fully at home and scarcely to be rivalled, are the new evaluations of seventeenth-century poetry: in particular, definitive editions by Grierson, Margoliouth, Martin, Miss Wade, and others, and that fresh analysis of "metaphysical" and allied verse to be found, typically, in T. S. Eliot. As an early example of the excellent

periodical articles which have served both to attest and to stimulate critical interest, one should mention a series of careful and scholarly papers by M. W. Croll, culminating in 1929 in a study of the baroque style in prose. The baroque in English poetry has been admirably criticized by Mario Praz (*Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*), and by Austin Warren. The greatest volume of comment is, characteristically, in German criticism, and here the disparities between points of view set forth are surprising: the reader who dips cautiously into the numerous treatises will be discouraged to find at one turn that Latimer, Whitgift, and Hooker are swept into the ranks of English baroque and at another that Crashaw stands as the sole representative of the style.

The purpose of these pages is to suggest that, whatever may be the outcome of attempts to settle the nature and scope of baroque and the validity of the kind of criticism implied by the use of the term, there remains a wide terrain where, equipped only with a tentative formulation of the qualities of baroque and urged by nothing more than his own interest in the varied shapes which the elusive breath of poetry inspires, the ordinary student may still find scope for profitable enquiry. It is to his advantage to sidestep the warfare being waged over ultimate problems of defining and applying the term, for these are of great difficulty. Should baroque be taken as meaning strictly an art-form, or may it in addition be thought of as a kind of artistic sensibility, or as a phase of general sensibility, or, indeed, as an historical period? And there are always those who exclaim that the following up of baroque is the gryphon's pursuit of the Arimaspian.

The matter of chronology is a little more urgent, for upon some limitation of baroque in this respect depends its rescue from being absorbed into the romantic movement; it is all too easy to make baroque continuous with, or even a facet of, romanticism. A good working restriction is that made by such a conservative historian as Preserved Smith, who writes, with reference to the period between 1588 and 1688: "What gives it unity and coherence is the baroque style which distinguishes all its achievements."[1] Precise limits are, of course, neither desirable nor possible. The Asam brothers were flourishing in Bavaria in the seventeen-thirties. But for practical purposes we may say that the sensibility giving rise to baroque in England took shape about the beginning of the last decade of the sixteenth century and that, about a hundred years later, baroque form in English literature had substantially fulfilled itself and the end was upon it.

The special difficulty which confronts the student of *literature* is the crucial one as to whether it is justifiable to transfer a set of values and criteria from the consideration of plastic art to that of verbal form. Efforts of this sort have not been conspicuously successful, and there is a justifiable suspicion of any effort to cross such ineradicable border lines as separate poetry from sculpture. Yet the practical conditions of critical work are favourable to such forays, as long as they are considered as such. "If we

[1] *A History of Modern Culture* (London, 1930), 604.

commit ourselves too absolutely to the belief that the materials and the objects and the origins and the social entanglements of the arts are too widely distinct for them to display any essential, common, stylistic principles, when they are scrutinized strictly as pure decoration, we are likely to find our craving for an ultimate common ground among them too strong for us."[2]

There is, finally, the exceedingly interesting problem of English baroque as distinct from continental. The contrast with Italian or German baroque, with their wealth of plastic art serving as a touchstone in any discussion of form and providing innumerable points of reference to literature, is a very striking one and might seem, at first, to render futile, not to say ridiculous, the attempt to fasten upon the literature of England an apparently alien concept. Such items as the porch of St. Mary's in Oxford, the western towers of St. Paul's, Temple Bar, Castle Howard, and the gate of Plymouth Citadel do not provide a very substantial background of reference, and Blenheim Palace is a solitary, if impressive, major construction in the baroque mode. Yet the very fact that literature is the supreme artistic expression of seventeenth-century England adds zest to the effort to discover whether or no the principles of form which proved pervasive on the continent have any part in its shaping.

Besides the relative poverty of architecture, painting, and sculpture in England, there is the further complication of England's geographical remoteness and of the traditional English habit of compromise. Whereas in Italy the classical renaissance had shot its bolt by 1500, in England it had scarcely begun. There is no English Mirandola. The classical renaissance and the Protestant Reformation proceed in England *pari passu;* the court of Henry VIII is at once the centre of the cultural revival and the occasion of a break with Rome. The Elizabethan compromise in matters of the Church acts as a modifying influence; it is essentially a *via media*, and the fact of Anglicanism prevents a clean sweep by the Reformers. The English Church combats Jesuits and Calvinists with equal vigour, so that the opposition between Rome and Geneva hardly comes to a head, except momentarily during the Commonwealth. The Established Church contains within itself most of the phenomena which are, by any stretch of imagination, parallels to the Counter-Reformation, yet it remains unalterably opposed to the papacy. There are therefore lacking in England motives for reaction and proud reaffirmation which played so large a part in the formation of continental baroque—a triumphant curia, the court life of independent princes and bishops, an already fully exploited renaissance art technique. Everything contributes to make baroque in England more involved and concealed than elsewhere. Moreover, the overlapping of cultural influences gives rise to two special problems: in the first place, the persistence of "gothic" and medieval elements in sixteenth-century England may lead us to identify as baroque much that is really carried over from before the renaissance rather

[2]Merritt Hughes, "Zeitgeist and Style" (*Sewanee Review*, XLII, 1932, 485).

than developed in opposition to it (this is particularly true of the work of Spenser); and, in the second, the lateness of the impact of the poetic *genres* of the classical renaissance upon the practice of English writers makes it inevitable that they borrow from the continent forms which have undergone a long process of development and are already, in some of their formal aspects, baroque.

The best point of departure for the average student is undoubtedly Heinrich Wölfflin, whose five categories, the result of forty years of study of European art, differentiate the forms of baroque from those of the high renaissance.[3] The transition, Wölfflin finds, is marked by a change from the perception of an object by outline and surfaces to a perception with less tangible design; there is development from the linear and from stress upon limits toward an apprehension of the world as shifting semblance; it is Dürer as against Rembrandt. Instead of employing a plane or parallel planes in design, the new technique lays emphasis on depth, recession, and diagonal penetration of space. There is also a movement from closed to open composition, from a stable equilibrium dominated by vertical and horizontal axes to a looser form, frequently spiral in its movement and suggesting by its sweep a completion beyond its own mechanical limits. Again, the renaissance use of multiplicity in design, relying upon the union of independent parts in harmony with one another, gives way to a unity achieved by means of a single theme or by the subordination to one dominant element of all the others, i.e., to fusion instead of co-ordination. Finally, there is a change from absolute clarity, in which explicitness is the chief aim, to relative clarity, in which light and colour have their own life, and beauty is perceived in the very darkness which modifies forms.

Baroque, in the formal sense, represents a perpetuation of the art of the high renaissance accompanied by a reaction against it, the two being compatible in that the reaction amounts to intensifying or accentuating certain elements already present, dislocating or deliberately "deforming" recognized shapes in the interests of greater expressiveness, and achieving, on the same stage, a new and striking dramatic quality, informed by a sense of splendour and actuated by a fresh interest in movement, in the dynamic.

A delight in artistry for its own sake and an intellectual preoccupation with the effectiveness of techniques make themselves felt pervasively in the arts and, as a consequence, there appear certain paradoxes: a greater life-likeness in delineation passes easily into an effect of unreal theatricality; profusion of detail is found consistent with the achievement of a single unity; and what looks like the wildest of licence may be systematically employed to make an effect: virtuosity is a keynote.

Within some such general classification we may find the churches of Borromini; such diverse productions of Bernini as the colonnaded piazza of St. Peter's and the reclining statue of Saint Teresa; and von Erlach's fusion of architecture, sculpture, and painting into a consistent whole. The

[3] *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, translated as *Principles of Art History* (London, 1932).

vigorous movement of Rubens, Rembrandt's subtlety of design, and the intellectual and esoteric imagery of El Greco has each its filiation with the underlying movement of baroque.

Baroque, then, would appear to be a comprehensive art-form based upon a specific artistic sensibility, which in turn springs from a general sensibility. (One should add what is not always recognized—that similar sensibilities may occur at intervals in the history of taste but the circumstances surrounding this particular outworking in the seventeenth century, together with the much more important factor of the individuality of the artists concerned, make true baroque a unique thing.) A feeling of triumph, of splendour, of certainty, and of power lies behind much of this art—a belief in the attainability of truth through appeals to authority, to force, and to heavenly sanction. This triumph is achieved only through struggle, through an intense effort to achieve unity, for the collective mind of the age is full of diametrical oppositions, of which the wars of religion are a symbol; in England Roman Catholic wars against Protestant, Anglican against Dissenter, Presbyterian against Independent. We find the sensual in conflict with the ascetic, flesh with spirit, grace with free will. Reason fights authority, mysticism is opposed by clear intellectual perception; scholasticism and classical humanism, themselves in conflict, find a new and common foe in rationalism.

With some such tentative criteria, and without regard for the unsettled disputes into which a complete analysis of baroque must unavoidably plunge, we may make an excursion into the English literature of the baroque period.

Seventeenth-century prose may frequently be described as explorative, and, like any other kind of exploration, full of surprises, dislocations, tentative adjustments, uncertainties, and unforeseen endings. Also, paradoxically, even at its most deliberate and self-conscious moments it frequently succeeds in maintaining the air of freshness and unexpected variety, for, like certain kinds of "metaphysical" poetry, it attempts to approximate in words the actual processes of thought rather than the revised conclusion, "so that [to quote Burton] as a river runs sometimes precipitate and swift, then dull and slow; now direct, then *per ambages;* now deep, then shallow; now muddy, then clear; now broad, then narrow; doth my style flow: now serious, then light; now comical, then satirical; now more elaborate, then remiss, as the present subject required, or as at that time I was affected."

This artistic trick, the presentation of thinking itself, whether genuine or whether adopted as a device to simulate psychological realism, depends for its effect on the paradoxical but unquestionable fact that realistic observation of anything is likely to have, at first, the effect of surprise. To watch the mind in operation is to lay oneself open to surprise and shock and this was well known to the very active, if somewhat crude, psychological investigators who mark the early part of the seventeenth century. Charron follows a passage which pays nominal tribute to the dignity of the spirit of

man "whereunto God hath given reason," by a plea for a closer facing of the facts:

> But I desire, that after all this we come to sound and to studie how to know this spirit; for we shall finde after all this, that it is both to itselfe and to another a dangerous instrument, a ferret that is to be feared, a little trouble-feast, a tendious and importune parasite and which as a Jugler and plaier at fast and loose, under the shadow of some gentle motion, subtile and smiling, forgeth, inventeth, and causeth all the mischiefs of the world: and the truth is, without it there are none.[4]

The movement in prose away from simple devices such as isocolon toward a new and often highly self-conscious simulation of the mind's actual operation takes many forms. A sentence from Milton will serve to illustrate one, at least, of these; from *Smectymnuus:*

> Some also were indued with a staid moderation and soundness of argument, to teach and convince the rational and sober-minded; yet not therefore that to be thought the only expedient course of teaching, for in times of opposition, when either against new heresies arising, or old corruptions to be reformed, this cool unpassionate mildness of positive wisdom is not enough to damp and astonish the proud resistance of carnal and false doctors, then (that I may have leave to soar awhile as the poets use) Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete diamond, ascends his fiery chariot, drawn with two blazing meteors, figured like beasts, but of a higher breed than any the zodiac yields, resembling two of those four which Ezekiel and St. John saw; the one visaged like a lion, to express power, high authority, and indignation; the other of countenance like a man, to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers: with these the invincible warrior, Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates, and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels.

Here the sentence breaks into unmatching parts, with an abrupt transition. The structure is loose and the thought, branching off suddenly, may produce unexpected links—"yet not therefore that to be thought." It is interesting also to note how completely the whole shape of the sentence is conditioned by the buoyant movement of the writer's immediate emotion.

In the profuse employment of emblems, epigrams, aphorisms, metaphors and "dark conceits," and perhaps also in the compressed Baconian essay and in some of the "characters," there operates a desire for significant condensation—often associated with the Tacitean style—the accompaniment of which is a deliberately sought obscurity. It is unnecessary to quote any of the numerous and well-known passages from the sermons and letters of Donne in which there is the characteristic baroque expressiveness, shrouded by varieties of simultaneous implication, by the alternate opening up of vistas and summary convergence of meanings to a single point. Donne's capacity for operating on a number of planes of thought at once and for moving irregularly from one to the other is masterly, and has obvious analogues in other baroque design.

A curious attestation of the essentially baroque manner of much of the current prose is afforded by the very careful and specific denunciation poured upon it by Sprat, Glanville, and others anxious to re-establish a simple, clear manner in writing. In his *History of the Royal-Society* (1667,

[4] *Of Wisdome* (trans. S. Lennard, London, 1615), 57-8.

pp. 111-13) there is a passage, too long to quote here, in which Sprat's denunciation turns upon two points: the tendency to expand and inflate style into "luxury," "redundance," "abundance," "volubility," "extravagance," "amplifications," "digressions," "swellings," and, second, a mysterious, unclear and figurative way of writing which leads to "mists," "uncertainties," "tropes," "figures," "mysteries," "metaphors," "deceits." The style he sets up by way of contrast is not expanded, but "close" and "naked," characterized by "shortness"; it is not obscure, but "positive" and "clear," resulting in "plainness"; it does not strive for artistic expressiveness, but for "naturalness," "easiness," and "primitive purity." His condemnation, then, falls exactly and squarely on the abuse of two kinds of baroque device, that of expansion into profusion, especially the profusion of ornamentation, and that of condensation into the obscure and the shadowed. His positive demands are directed against a root principle of the baroque manner—the achievement of the maximum expressiveness by every artistic device available. Glanville has almost the same comment and criticism: he approves of a style in which:

> The Epithets are genuine, the Words proper and familiar, the Periods smooth and of middle proportion: It is not broken with ends of Latin, nor impertinent Quotations; nor made harsh by hard words, or needless terms of Art: Not rendered intricate by long Parentheses, nor gaudy by flaunting Metaphors; not tedious by wide fetches and circumferences of Speech, not dark by too much curtness of Expression: 'Tis not loose and unjointed, rugged and uneven; but as polite and as fast as Marble; and briefly, avoids all the notorious defects, and wants none of the proper ornaments of Language.[5]

In the field of drama there would appear to be evidences of baroque form, widely separated chronologically and so disparate in their nature as to make synthesis still a matter for speculation. Anxious as one might be to keep off the knotty problem of the connection, if any, between the art of Shakespeare and baroque, it is impossible not to suspect a relation between the progression from high renaissance to baroque and the evolution of form from the symmetrical arrangements of *A Comedy of Errors* to the looser structure of, say, *Lear* in which the demands of the tragic theme are satisfied by a preoccupation with the total effect of the play—with its shape as a unified whole. At the other end of the scale are the heroic plays of Dryden. Their logical magnificence, the vigorous unreality of their action, and rhetorical insincerity of their emotion, together with the deliberate artistry of resounding rodomontade, result in a kind of massiveness which, although reminiscent of Louis Quatorze rather than of the Seicento, has, clearly enough, its place in the total pattern we are considering.

In examining the poetry of the period, it is, of course, impossible to tip Wölfflin's concepts over into another kind of art and use them immediately as criteria. But analogues cannot fail to suggest themselves. The heavy, explicit didacticism and matter-of-fact piety, exemplified in Tottel's *Miscellany*, lose their dominance over religious poetry and make way for that rich metaphor, charged with mystical implication, which we find in,

[5] *Plus Ultra* (London, 1668), 84-5.

say, Vaughan. The popularity of the high renaissance sonnet sequence wanes suddenly, giving place to a new interest in the semantic determination of rhythm; from Donne develops the fashion of simulating in one's stanza the motion of the thinking mind. Chapman proclaims a cult of deliberately sought obscurity, and the minor "metaphysicals" pursue a policy of "heightening words and shadowing sense." Spenser and Milton present a contrast, to which we return presently, between metrical forms of independent stability and the enjambment of the continuous verse-paragraph. All this suggests a transition similar to that which Wölfflin discerns in his own field of the graphic and plastic arts.

The school which Johnson characterized as "on the watch for novelty" knew how to trouble the smooth course of a conventional Platonic sentiment or achieve an effect by "breaking of accent." A similar understanding of the possibilities of deformation—in the technical sense of the word—was possessed by the architects who broke the regularity of a circle of columns, indented the uniform line of a cornice with shadowy recessions or achieved movement by corkscrewing pillars. Both employed intellectually conceived devices to produce unusual and striking beauties; and Eliot's phrase defining seventeenth-century wit—"a tough reasonableness beneath the slight lyric grace"—goes as well for the logically embodied fantasies of the Brothers Asam. The "metaphysical" conceit is not infrequently itself a baroque device. In most of its varieties, and especially in its union of disparates and its concentration or dilation of ideas, it has the baroque quality of surprise, movement, and dramatic effectiveness. Frequently, too, it has a significant darkness, deliberately used for accentuation: as Bacon says of "parabolical" poetry, "it serves for obscuration; and it serveth also for illustration."

"Out of the high style developed from Marlowe through Jonson . . . the seventeenth century separated two qualities: wit and magniloquence," writes T. S. Eliot in his essay on Marvell; and on the same principle, though on a smaller scale, contraction and dilation, often immediately consecutive, are the groundwork of many a "metaphysical" conceit. The image becomes a lens to focus an idea, to effect a rapprochement between microcosm and macrocosm: Marvell's "drop of dew"

> Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
> The greater heaven in an heaven less.

And, as a result of this compression, of this narrow band of contact between the disparate ideas, the image easily flares off into illimitable suggestion; indeed, one may apply to it Marvell's lines on the dew-drop which follow later in the same poem:

> How loose and easy hence to go,
> How girt and ready to ascend;
> Moving but on a point below,
> It all about does upwards bend.

There is a clear analogy between the ingenious use of metaphor and the

baroque employment of perspective to condense a great deal into a single line of vision, and one is tempted to see a likeness between the "O altitudo!" of "metaphysical" thinking and the topmost flourish of ornament which seems to relieve the lateral pressure in a façade or the leaping up of El Greco's tense lines into curves which fulfil themselves beyond the limits of the canvas.

The "metaphysical" image exerts its maximum effect at a single point of association; it has the air, even at its best, of an intellectual *tour de force*. The baroque architect employs similar devices: a flat ceiling, painted to simulate the interior of a dome when viewed from a single marked position, will change into ridiculously distorted proportions if seen from any other spot. And this brings us to the common danger shared by all forms of baroque art, the danger of allowing adroitly handled devices to become an end in themselves, of permitting the delight in overcoming difficulties and achieving effects by superb manipulation to run riot. Crashaw is always on the edge of this pitfall and all the "metaphysicals" fall into it sooner or later; even Marvell slips easily from a firmly controlled abundance of witty imagination to the mere bag of tricks:

> Yet thus the laden House does sweat,
> And scarce endures the Master great:
> But where he comes the swelling Hall
> Stirs, and the Square grows Spherical.

Donne, Crashaw, and Milton are probably the three most interesting exponents of baroque form in poetry: Donne on account of his early and deliberate dislocation of conventional shapes, Crashaw because of his direct connections with continental Catholic art, and Milton for the large structure and very deliberate artistry of his major works, which give a wide field for comparison.

As against the verse of the Elizabethan amourists, Donne's work shows great vigour, licence, irregularity, and technical virtuosity, and he exhibits these qualities in a way common to other baroque artists. In his effort for complete expressiveness, he poses for himself difficult problems and strains all his resources to solve them. The first stanza of "The Canonization," for example, seems to take its shape from the immediate outpouring of the poet's protest—"For Godsake hold your tongue and let me love." The succeeding stanzas conform to the model with some difficulty and the concluding one exemplifies in no uncertain manner Carew's lines to his brother poet:

> Our troublesome language bends, made only fit
> With her tough thick-ribb'd hoops to gird about
> Thy giant fancy . . . .

Repeatedly in Donne we find the same sequence of outbreak, compound fracture of smooth convention and smooth line, and then a masterly moulding of language to carry out the dramatic pattern. Even in the sonnet form, Donne can give the effect of superimposing continuous movement

over the set frame:

> At the round earth's imagin'd corners blow
> Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
> From death, you numberless infinities
> Of souls . . . .

His poem, "The Bait," lends itself to direct comparison with Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd" and Raleigh's "Reply," and we find, in spite of surface similarities, that Donne had introduced the new tension and dramatic realism which might be expected. The imagery becomes more difficult and more concentrated and the whole is made to subserve a single underlying movement of the imagination in a fashion far more subtle than in the earlier pieces.

The poetry of Crashaw affords the best, or at least the most obvious, example of baroque technique, and this matter has been adequately dealt with by Praz, Warren and Beachcroft. But a further and exceedingly important point not often recognized is that the criteria used to establish Crashaw as a baroque artist may be applied to a number of his contemporaries with a like result. Marvell's plea "To His Coy Mistress" is at one and the same time a formal argument and an emotional outburst; irresistible logic and complete extravagance combine in one, and abundant fancifulness does not interfere with the intellectual presentation of a case. Passionate, witty, formal, surprising, compressed in the extreme yet bursting with wild and even terrible imagination, the piece is, in its own way, as good baroque as anything in the century, and is almost directly reminiscent of some fantastic doorway of von Erlach's. Carew exemplifies one of the decorative aspects of baroque: "The Rapture," with its ostensible passion yet obvious theatricality, exhibits on a larger scale than usual the poet's capacity for developing a theme in the spirit of a virtuoso, and one comes, almost as definitely as when following Crashaw, into a world of words remote from things. The capacity of baroque poetry to put decoration above any other function, when this is felt to be necessary, makes it peculiarly suitable to the handling of rigid dogma, to the elaboration of a ritual, and Carew has a ritual to elaborate, a dogma to embroider, for he is concerned with the rites and doctrines of love:

> Such incense, vows, and holy rites as were
> To the involved serpent of the year
> Paid by Egyptian priests, lay I before
> Lucinda's sacred shrine . . . .

As clearly as anyone, Carew exemplifies the intellectual excitement over poetry as form, over the handling of a familiar medium with the utmost technical skill and refinement; he is a master of elaboration.

There are other qualities of Crashaw's verse which distinguish it as baroque and which, far from being peculiar to Crashaw, belong also to a number of his contemporaries. The capacity for achieving unity in complication and for subordinating the validity of the single line to the internal

cohesion of the total passage are well known to the student of Milton's longer works. Ingenious surprises abound in Herbert; the use of words as symbols reappears in Traherne; and the elaboration of a series of highly flexible and individual methods out of the materials supplied by the conventional formalism of the high renaissance is a feat common to an architect like Pozzo and to Donne and Milton.

Finally, one may note how often the poets present what would be a baroque subject or design if graphically portrayed: Marvell, for example, with exactly the capacity of the baroque painter for embodying an emotion in one dramatic gesture and for dealing with a subject like martyrdom with a mixture of high unreality, symbolism, and theatrical convincingness, gives us a portrait of the lover:

> See how he nak'd and fierce does stand,
> Cuffing the Thunder with one hand;
> While with the other he does lock,
> And grapple, with the stubborn Rock:
> From which he with each Wave rebounds,
> Torn into Flames, and ragg'd with Wounds.
> And all he says, a Lover drest
> In his own Blood does relish best.

It is interesting to examine the poetry of Spenser and of Milton with a view to discovering whether there are points of correspondence between the differences which separate them and those which lie between high renaissance art and baroque. The comparison is of especial value because both poets are concerned to a great extent with the same fundamental problem, the relation of the sensuousness and learning of the renaissance with the serious moral purpose and supernatural sanctions of Puritanism.

Milton tends much more strongly than Spenser to unify and universalize the situations with which he deals; he sees in his own problem the problem of all the English saints, or of the entire Church, or of mankind at large; his disappointment over Mary Powell is the occasion for a general treatise on divorce, and so on. At the same time, his emotions are more violent: Spenser's love for woman is all "pure affections" and "modest thoughts," without introversion or serious moral struggle, while Milton passes suddenly from self-conscious restraint to disillusion, and the bitterness and complication of his own experience shadow his portraits of Eve and Dalila. Spenser's eager and idealistic temperament is fundamentally gentle and his ultimate feeling for things proceeds from a belief in beauty and love; Milton sets up the standard of virtue and liberty. Spenser passes easily from epithalamia to "complaints"; he loves earthly beauty, and, because it is unstable, he turns to more lasting joys in Heaven. Milton is always aware of the interrelation of sorrow and joy and he sees the same beauties and the same moral problem in Earth as in Heaven.

The most obvious qualities of Spenser's style are, perhaps, fluency, fecundity, ease, melody, and pervasive charm; Milton may be said to embody all these in his art, but to interfuse also new seriousness, weight,

and depth and deliberately to complicate his designs: extra elements of dramatic and didactic controversy are added to Milton's side of the balance.

The Spenserian stanza has an independence of its own; even in the midst of action or argument each set of nine lines contrives to maintain its own integrity. The recurrence of the second rhyme links all parts of the stanza together; the tendency to make the fifth line either a pendant to the first quatrain or the beginning of the second gives the whole scheme a pivot to turn upon and assists the internal balance of the stanza. The well-recognized use of the final alexandrine is also in keeping: it tends to close the stanza off, while, at the same time, it adds to the melodiousness and tranquillity of the total effect.

Whether we turn to the sonnets of the *Amoretti*, the books of *The Faerie Queene*—where, Spenser tells us, "many other adventures are intermedled; but rather as Accidents than intenements"—the stanzas of the *Epithalamion*, or the separate months of *The Shepheards Calender*, the effect is the same—in a word, disparate: each section is set in relation and balance with others and linked into a unity of consecutiveness, and each part possesses an independent and stable unity of its own.

Separateness and consecutiveness are marks also of Spenser's formal thought. In his *Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*, for instance, he juxtaposes the neo-Platonic world-view, which finds beauty, love, and virtue in close interaction and beholds an ascending scale of being leading to God, with the orthodox Protestant view, according to which the impassable gulf between sinful man and a holy God is only to be bridged by the sacrifice of Christ. Each view fulfils its part in the artistic structure of the piece and the violent clash goes unregarded.

Milton, on the other hand, develops verse forms remarkable for their flexible continuity—above all, in the three great poems of his maturity. The predominance of semantic rhythm over metrical structure grows greater as time goes on; the integrity of the line, consistently respected by Spenser, gives way to "deformation." Milton's renunciation of rhyme is the deliberate, conscious action of the baroque artist who prefers expressiveness and the continuity of the sense to set form: those who stick to rhyme, he writes, "express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expressed them"; it is better to rely upon "apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another." The larger units of Milton's work exhibit the same "drawing out": every episode of *Paradise Lost* has its place in the complete scheme and the various centres of interest are not so much linked in succession as united by a multitude of radiating connections.

Milton's view of the world and life is in harmony with the foregoing. We are in the midst of a complicated series of happenings, to which God alone holds the key, and His mysterious, hidden purposes are "ever best found in the close." While the allegory of *The Faerie Queene* separates out into distinct planes which require little connection with one another, in

Paradise Lost the factual and historical form an unbroken continuity with the mythical, and no dividing line can be traced.

A necessarily vexed problem is the relation of both Spenser and Milton to the "classical." In the sense of achieving order in beauty, both are, of course, classical. But the kinds of order they bring forth are not the same. In Spenser it is chiefly a flexible adapting of style to subject, moment by moment—"dewe observing of Decorum everye where." In Milton syntheses are more complex, and incompatibilities, while less obvious, are more fundamental: the struggle to cast a Christian theme into a classical mould is unremitting. His form shows new elements of movement, weight, and surprise. As in the architectural diagrams of Pozzo, one may see the materials of the classical architecture of antiquity—its stock in trade—displayed in new alignments and perspectives, productive of saliences and recessions, of massive groupings and unexpected effects, in a similar way Milton's classicism turns out to be a baroque variety: "Classical in structure and (at bottom) in his style and rhetoric, he develops the old epical artifices to produce effects of vagueness and immateriality which they had never before been made to serve . . . . And the difference between him and Dante in general is, as should be expected, that between the Middle Ages and the Secondary Reformation, not the Middle Ages and the Renaissance."[6] In *Lycidas*, although Milton employs the method of the classical elegists and some of their materials, there is "bitter constraint" which, breaking the metrical flow and troubling the even tenor of formal lament, is only subdued by an extreme tension maintained between discordant elements. Nowhere, perhaps, does he achieve more triumphantly the peculiar unity of baroque than in this tightly strung web of opposing forces.

Examining *Paradise Lost* for evidences of baroque design and decoration we find a numerous series of resemblances, no one of which need be pushed too far, between Milton's structural methods and those of the baroque architect. And on the simply impressionistic side, such a building as the ecclesiastical foundation at Melk, by its air of proud dominance, its well-articulated design, and its striking ornamentation, conveys to one observer, at least, an impression very similar in kind to that produced by Milton's great poem. *Paradise Lost* illustrates the desire for construction on a large and comprehensive scale: it contains everything known, in space and in time, and its problem is the whole problem of God, man, the universe, good and evil. Its architectural planning is bold in the extreme and on the whole successful. And if one wishes to be fanciful, the bridge built from hell by Sin and Death may be looked upon as an example of the "solids without their true bearing" to which baroque fantasy may run. Milton assures the reader, in three sets of parentheses, that this thing is possible, yet the great incongruous arch of flotsam, bound together by the petrifying glances of the anxious architect and throwing out of balance both the physical and moral symmetry of the universe, strikes one, when

[6] E. E. Stoll, *Poets and Playwrights* (University of Minnesota, 1930), 289.

viewed beside the traditional empyrean and the spheres, as a highly spectacular *tour de force.*

If we turn from structure to decoration, Milton's handling of the simile shows deliberate and unusual technical expedients. It has been demonstrated elsewhere that Milton's epic similes make use, to an unprecedented degree, of prolepsis and condensed suggestion, and that their organic quality often makes it possible to extend their application, point by point, at great variety.[7] His preference for the ornate and magnificent figure over the simple and homely one is an additional and congruent point. Furthermore, the distribution of figurative and decorative elements in the epic is in deliberately uneven groupings.

There is some fundamental in the baroque aesthetic which produces bold clashes of colour, difficult equilibrium in design, effects of tension and straining movement, and the unification of what individually is unbalanced into the wholeness of a designed composition. Milton makes use of similar devices in his thinking and in the formal handling of his poetry. Continually he struggles to bring comprehensive variety into unity: the great battles in Heaven epitomize all warfare and their phases remain logically incongruous, yet their total impression satisfies the reader; the Ptolemaic system and the Copernican are made reluctantly to shake hands; on the small scale we find phrases such as "ever-burning sulphur unconsumed" and "darkness visible"; and viewing Milton's work in the largest terms we find a struggle to unify the renaissance and the Reformation. Everywhere Milton tends to reject the merely self-contained; he has little interest in a consecutive procession of ideas or events: unity through relations of dominance and subordination is his consistent desire. A motif which runs through all his writing is the conflict between passion and reason with the necessity of subjecting the former to the latter.

All this goes to explain Milton's choice of theme. Not for him the materials of Spenser and Sidney; he refuses

> . . . to dissect
> With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights . . . .

Instead of the meandering and consecutive, Milton chooses the tangled which needs active and difficult explanation: he will justify the ways of God to man, and this effort to fuse dogmatic assertion with careful, reasoned argument shapes his whole design and not infrequently affects the very cadence of his verse. In an indignant plea for vengeance, he can superimpose the rhythm of his imprecation over the conventional beat of the sonnet form and its division into octave and sestet:

> Forget not: in thy book record their groans
> Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
> Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
> Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
> The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
> To heaven.

[7] James Whaler, "The Miltonic Simile" (*P.M.L.A.*, XLVI, 1931, 1034-74).

As surely as the Augustan clarity of epigram is associated with the heroic couplet, so Milton's tough and reasoned dogmatism, his intense and splendid quality of supported asseveration are associated with the "sense variously drawn out" into the web of a verse-paragraph and with the high, flagrant splendour of his images.

Milton's selection of images and themes will also bear examination in the light of certain well-known preferences traditional among baroque painters. His feeling for the ornate portal, with a decoration of heraldic figures is, at least, interesting: the kingly palace gate of heaven, with frontispiece of diamond and gold; the alabaster pillars at the entrance to Eden, with celestial armoury hung high; and the flame-wreathed gate of hell, with its writhing, shadowy figures on either side. Sin and Death themselves, by their moral significance, their dramatic gestures and the chiaroscuro which half conceals them are rendered far more terrible than, say, the monsters of Spenser, which by contrast seem merely grotesque.

Of much more importance is Milton's handling of themes of power and triumph, of apotheosis. A magnificent piece of baroque artistry is found in the return of Messiah when, after his victory, "He celebrated rode, Triumphant through mid Heaven"; and even better is the ascent of the Son after the work of creation:

> The planets in their stations listening stood,
> While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
> . . . He through Heaven,
> That opened wide her blazing portals, led
> To God's eternal house direct the way—
> A broad and ample road whose dust is gold . . . .

It is with some basis in critical comparison, then, as well as with the support of impressionistic feeling, that one reads, say, the first book of *Paradise Lost* as a baroque piece. The inherent theatricality, accented by the most artful chiaroscuro, of the presentation of hell; the author's delight in the most ostentatious splendour and in effectively massed images in particular; the sense of intricate, broken outline in the description of the infernal scene—the quality of these elements is characteristic of the whole treatment. Satan's rebellious verve controls by its movement of fierce defiance the whole book and carries with it much of Milton's own spirit of revolt, yet even this fiery gesture is made a part of the gigantic and organic whole of the poem, as Milton follows with relentless judgments the career of the fiend and succeeds in holding in one tense equilibrium his own strong instinct for individualistic revolt and his Christian submission to reasoned doctrine, to the revealed will of God.

The English-speaking, scholarly world has shown some distrust of baroque as a usable concept in literary classification, and in its criticism of German works on English baroque, in particular, there is a notable preponderance of light over sweetness. It is encouraging, nevertheless, to see some instances of deliberate and careful appreciation of the baroque features

in the seventeenth century, as in Mr. Tillyard's "Introduction" to Milton's *Private Correspondence and Academic Exercises* (1932). Of the tone of some of the letters Tillyard remarks, "it has a kind of baroque gravity like that of a good heroic play; imperturbably and solemnly exaggerated and yet critically conscious of the exaggeration"; and of another set of correspondence, "The formality of the style which in the Cambridge letters was unpleasantly cold and stilted now seems to glow with an apt Italianate warmth. The baroque of Lecce has, as it were, supplanted the baroque of Peterhouse chapel."

There are many advantages to the use of baroque as a touchstone for the literature of the time. Now that the boundaries of seventeenth-century scholarship are clearly marked and the "metaphysicals" collectively and individually dealt with, the search for baroque, conducted with the necessary *sprezzatura* and with no desire to achieve a premature codification, is not without its pleasures. There is excellent fun to be had in the slightly disreputable pursuit of poaching across the boundaries which separate the arts.

The recognition of a baroque period means, among other things, that the century need no longer always draw apart like a pack of tapered cards. To establish unity across the chasm which is at present too often allowed to divide the age of *Samson Agonistes*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and the heroic play from the rest of the century, would be in itself in the nature of a baroque triumph. Baroque stagecraft; the relation between baroque form and the Plotinian aesthetic; baroque music: these are further subjects for investigation.

Baroque, as a usable concept, will have its day and, fulfilling its purpose, pass (one hopes) into the dim limbo of worn out critical tools. At the moment, it seems opportune and useful because it readily provokes that perpetually renewed freshness in our apperception of poetry which alone justifies the labours of formal criticism. Besides providing, independent of languages, some means of comparison between English poetry and European art in general, the re-examination of familiar works on the lines here indicated—but by those whose discriminations of form are rendered more subtle by special studies—would, I believe, reveal a varied richness of artistry too often left to simply intuitive appreciation.

RETURN TO AN OLD BOOK

CARLETON STANLEY

RECENTLY a happy chance led me to take down an old book which I had not opened for many years, *The Golden Ass*, by Apuleius. As always happens, enough of it had been forgotten to make the story fresh and interesting.

Little is known of Apuleius himself; but that hardly matters, in comparison with the world he depicts—the Mediterranean world of the second century A.D. We know that he was born in Africa, at Madaura which was supposed to be half Numidian and half Gaetulian. Some put his birth at about 125 to 130 A.D. Whether he married a rich widow early or late, he had money to travel and went to Greece. Later he learned the Latin tongue and it was in Latin he wrote. He probably knew the writings of Lucian pretty well and possibly models known to Lucian which are no longer extant. In a dim and less certain way, perhaps at second or third hand, he knew some of the works of Plato. His Latin is a jumble of early and late vocabulary: perhaps he picked it up mainly from half-educated people.

The Mediterranean world he describes has no clear geographical frontiers or features, and no very certain government. Allusions are made by way of jest, to Roman laws on adultery and runaway slaves. The allusion to the policing of markets and the control of prices is a caricature of Athenian rather than Roman practice. The most solemn oath one can take is to swear by the Emperor, who is universally regarded as a divinity. It is a world infested with brigands; it is superstitious; given over to quackeries and magic, and we hear nothing of Christianity. A man wanders through it at his peril and is certain to have many adventures. Here and there, women are possessed of great wealth which they use unscrupulously and chiefly for their own pleasure.

The hero of the story is supposed to be a Greek who wanders into Thessaly because of its reputation for magic. The echoes which resound there are of Corinth, Aegina, and of Sparta, rather than of Athens. One of the characters introduced is called Socrates, but he is far removed from the Socrates known to us. Everywhere there are public baths and this sounds more like Roman Africa than Greece at any period. Indeed Apuleius himself may have travelled chiefly in Africa. The hero soon encounters Milo, a skinflint who entertains him in a niggardly way; and we presently hear of magic-working women. The rich woman who has designs on him is forestalled by a servant girl, who not only makes love to him but divulges many magic secrets to him. Magic and brigands violently cross the course of true love, and, instead of being turned into a bird, with his lover, he is transformed into an ass—ill used by one master after another, though he retains throughout some of his human faculties, and has the advantage, in

his asinine shape, of seeing and hearing many things that would otherwise have been unknown to him.

Midway, the story more or less stops, while an old crone, to soothe and comfort a distressed maiden, tells the story of Eros and Psyche.

The story is that Psyche is the youngest daughter of the king and queen "in a certain city." The two older daughters are beautiful as princesses should be, and marry kings in adjoining states. But the youngest is of a beauty so ethereal that men glance at her with awe and reverence, none offering to marry her. Her fame spreads and visitors come from far and wide across the seas, and accord her the worship they had previously given Venus. This offends the powerful goddess, who determines to disgrace and destroy her mortal rival. She calls her son, Cupid or Eros, to her aid and orders him to mate Psyche with a loathsome reptile. Eros, however, falls in love with Psyche and conspires with Apollo, whose temple strangely, for this time, is in Miletus, and with Zephyr, and uses all his miraculous powers not merely to enjoy the love of Psyche on earth, but to make her an immortal, and his wife.

The old king, perplexed and grieved that Psyche has no suitors, sends to the oracle for advice and an oracle is delivered in Latin that Psyche must be taken up the mountain crag to become the wife of the serpent; otherwise his city and his people will be destroyed. The mob overrules the reluctant king and Psyche is arrayed for this strange marriage. Then Zephyr, at the bidding of Eros, brings her safely down into a valley where she is laid to sleep on a bed of flowers. Next morning, she sees nearby, a palace richer and more fairy-like than the imagination of poets usually conjures up. Invisible servants wait upon her. Invisible musicians make music for her, and at night, invisibly, Eros comes to her bed. Her happiness seems complete. But three things plague Psyche: she can hardly forget the terrible oracle; she knows that her parents and sisters must now believe that the oracle is being fulfilled, and so she longs to relieve their anxieties; and finally, she has a full share of feminine curiosity and wants to see her lover and to know who he is.

Despite warnings from her husband about the dangers surrounding her, she persuades him to enable her sisters to visit her in the day-time when he is absent; they come and are filled with envy and hate. She sends them away with many presents and messages to her father. On the second visit they persuade her to spy on her lover and to attempt his death, giving out that he is the serpent indeed, and that he will devour her and her child. In a faint-hearted way, Psyche enters into the plot, sees her divine lover, and knows that she has lost him through her disobedience. Eros lures the two sisters to destruction and deserts Psyche, who wanders far and wide in search of him, and in turn is pursued by the hatred of Venus. Finally she is captured and forced to do impossible tasks which Eros and his allies make possible. In the end Venus is reconciled to the marriage of Psyche with

her son and to her becoming immortal. On Olympus, she gives birth to a son, *Pleasure* or *Joy*.

The story of Eros and Psyche is not merely an episode, but contains many episodes within itself. How much of it is original and how much derivative, it is impossible to say. The dissolute hag who tells it calls it a Milesian story, and indeed the whole of Apuleius is sometimes referred to as a Milesian tale. The underlying idea is of course platonic; for Eros lays aside awhile his love of mischief and entanglements, and in a secret, mystic way, marries Psyche: he is the shadowy embodiment of the Heavenly Love of Plato, and Psyche, though a mortal girl, wears the name of the human spirit or the soul of man.

After this happy ending to the long episode, Apuleius returns to his donkey-hero who is still marked out for many sufferings, but who finally, through initiation into the mysteries, regains his human shape. The second transformation brings the book to an end in a blaze of high-flown poetry.

What an adventure to take down a dusty, musty Latin book and there to discover a world of which we know very little indeed below the level of emperor and intriguing profligate courtiers and legionaries; and to discover it as a world of adventure, superstition, and magic; and in the midst of it, a tale of such deathless beauty! For the story of Eros and Psyche at once became the inspiration of artists and poets. I remembered and took down the works of Robert Bridges, one of whose long poems is *Eros and Psyche*. It purports to be a translation from the Latin of Apuleius, but Apuleius serves only as an inspiration, as we are more or less warned on the fly-leaf by the quotation from Keats:

> O latest born, O loveliest vision far
> Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!

It was an added piece of luck to read once again this poem of Bridges. It is evenly told in seven-line stanzas of crossed rhymes, one for each day, for each month of the year. It is so evenly told that hardly any of the stanzas and perhaps none of the lines are quotable; but the story holds the reader from beginning to end. It was first published in 1885, when Matthew Arnold was still living, and ran through several editions before 1912.

Bridges takes great liberties with his original. For example, he boldly and very circumstantially places Psyche's home and her fairy palace on the island of Crete. No geographical vagueness for him! Besides, Crete had been the land of fables from of old. Again there are many amplifications and artifices, such as telling a story in twelve "measures" or chapters, one for each month with a stanza for each day of the month. It might seem almost a perversity to make an acrostic of the stanza describing the unseen musicians:

Pathetic strains and passionate they wove,
Urgent in ecstasies of heavenly sense;
Responsive rivalries that while they strove,
Combined in full harmonious suspense,
Entrancing wild desire, then fell at last
Lulled in soft closes and with gay contrast
Launched forth their fresh unwearied excellence.

Many of his passages are in the highest degree pictorial, for example:

And then the goddess stepped upon the shell
Which took her weight; and others threw a train
Of soft silk o'er her that unfurled to swell
In sails, at breath of flying zephyrs twain;
And all her way with foam in laughter strown
With stir of music and of conches blown
Was Aphrodite launched upon the main.

There is more than a reminiscence of Botticelli here.

But, despite all this, there is something of a Greek austerity about Bridges' poem, as there is about all his work. It is quiet; as I have said already, it does not lend itself to quotation, either by line or by stanza. One of the extant works of Apuleius is a collection of purple patches which he culled from his own writings. But there are no purple patches in Bridges.

So from one thing to another. I took down Morris's *Earthly Paradise* in which he, years before Bridges, had told the story of Eros and Psyche—a version by which, J. W. Mackail said, "the story is best known to modern readers."

Nothing could be more different from Bridges' handling of the story. Occasionally Morris uses—in his case, the regular "rhyme royal"—a seven-line stanza for special purposes, which Bridges uses throughout, but in the main the verse is a flowing iambic pentameter, in rhyming couplets, well suited to narration. He does not set out stately picture after picture, he moves to the story. He maintains the geographical vagueness of the original, and on the whole, takes much less liberty with it than does Bridges.

There is another difference between the two English poets, perhaps not hard to appreciate, but certainly not easy to state precisely. The story of Eros and Psyche, so far as we know, is first told by Apuleius; there is no earlier Greek or Latin version extant. It is set, like a pure pearl, in a farrago of adventures, violence, magic, superstition, and squalid passion—all viewed with the eye of an ass transformed from a man. When the story of Eros and Psyche concludes, the ass laments that he did not have a pen and book to write down so lovely a tale! Though the Eros and Psyche story has its wonders and transformations too, it is more in the Greek vein than the rest of Apuleius. It is more wholesome in tone, more idealistic, one might even say, more rational. Bridges, in a way, makes it more Greek still by his quietness of tone and austerity. Apuleius himself, in

the rest of his book, is not a Greek at all; he is not even Latin. In his hands, the Latin language is fusing into a strange vocabulary and new rhythms; his mind and interests are neither Greek nor Latin; his consuming passion is the black art of magic. Rationality, law, government, even any precise geography, are beyond his ken. Shades of a Dark Age occasionally lengthen across him. Though the Gothic Age and the renaissance lie between them, many of the qualities of Apuleius are comprehensible to Morris: Apuleius looks forward, somehow, to Romance, and Morris looks back, in his hatred of the ugly life around him, to the same period. At the age of four he was well read in Walter Scott.

And Keats! Though I remembered other phrases and lines of his "Ode to Psyche," I had somehow forgotten the couplet:

> O latest born and loveliest vision far
> Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!

The couplet might seem to be the first and the last word on the beautiful story. By what divination did the unlettered Keats pierce through the art and the imaginings of so many later ages backward to the Greek? I suppose he is a good argument, to a certain extent, for reading ancient literature only in translations. If we could be sure that all the readers, or many readers, of translations had the genius of Keats and were able, like him, to vow to Psyche:

> Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
> In some untrodden region of my mind.

If we could be sure of that!

THE LEGACY OF BAUDELAIRE

L. J. Bondy

SINCE we are to discuss the legacy of Baudelaire, it will be well to note that a legacy, i.e., that part of himself which a man leaves to posterity, will seldom have the same value for heirs as it had for himself. This is particularly true of a literary inheritance. It will necessarily enter into composition with other and most varied elements, with results that will be even more varied and sometimes frankly contradictory. Take the Cartesian inheritance, for example, in Condillac and in Berkeley; the Augustinian inheritance in St. Thomas Aquinas and in Martin Luther or John Calvin; the easily recognizable legacy of Baudelaire in a Rimbaud and a Lautréamont on the one hand, in a Huysmans and a Paul Claudel on the other. An attempt to trace exhaustively the influence of any great man will therefore be not only an endless task but also one beset with innumerable opportunities for being wrong. To take a pertinent example, critics quite generally take it for granted that Edgar Allan Poe exercised a profound influence on Baudelaire. Did not the French poet sing the praises of his American contemporary?—consider him as a kind of elder brother? Did he not translate much of his work and win for him in Europe a greater measure of admiration than he had received in his own native land? Yet nothing is less certain than this so-called influence. Before he had read a line of Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire had already given ample evidence that he was Baudelaire. A close study of the problem leads rather to the conclusion that we here have to do, not with influence, but with kindred spirits who, though they worked in circumstances that were very different, frequently arrived at similar conclusions. But what still remains mysterious is that the two poets, with no apparent collusion, should have so often agreed not only on conclusions but on accidentals and modalities that are subject to such endless variations. That discovery was what first attracted Baudelaire to Poe. "Do you know why I so patiently translated Poe?" he wrote to Théophile Thoré in 1864, "*it was because he resembled me.* The first time I opened a book of his, I found to my consternation and delight not only subjects of which I had dreamed but whole sentences thought by me and written by him twenty years before."[1] Here too we find what is perhaps the best explanation of how Baudelaire could practically copy an important page from Poe's "The Poetic Principle" without feeling the need for quotation marks.

When we have made all these allowances and issued these warnings, it still remains extremely difficult to deny that there is such a thing as an authentic Baudelaire legacy and that it has played a very important role in practically all the worth-while French poetry of the last eighty years

[1] *Lettres* (Paris, 1907), 362.

and in much of the English poetry of the same period. Even before his early death, Baudelaire could see the beginning of his deep influence. When Paul Verlaine published an article on him in December, 1865, Baudelaire wrote to his mother: "There is talent in those young men; but what extravagances! What exaggerations and what youthful infatuation! Since a few years back, I have been noticing, here and there, imitations and tendencies which alarmed me. I know nothing more compromising than imitators, and I love nothing so much as to be alone. But it is impossible and it seems that the *Baudelaire school* exists."[2] Soon it would no longer be a question of a Baudelaire school but of an inescapable factor in every school. Arthur Symons, writing in 1906, says: "Of the men of letters of our age he was the most scrupulous. He spent his whole life in writing one book of verse (out of which all French poetry has come since his time), one book of prose in which prose becomes a fine art, some criticism which is the sanest, subtlest, and the surest which his generation has produced, and a translation which is better than a marvellous original."[3] A little later, in 1926, Stanislas Fumet, one of the most profound as well as one of the most sympathetic students of Baudelaire, will go even further: "Baudelaire's destiny is a strange one. With a single volume, *Les Fleurs du mal*, which could have been reduced still further, not only has he made us forget the poets that preceded him, but he has made it impossible to keep on being a poet in any other way but his."[4] And the poets themselves have generally been the first to admit the truth of such seemingly exaggerated statements; Mallarmé, Valéry, Claudel, the Surrealists in general.

We shall try to see in what manner Baudelaire influenced his successors. No man can bequeath his genius. Besides there are many things in Baudelaire which no sensible man would try to imitate. Our aim will be to isolate the ideas, attitudes, and methods of our author which impressed those who came under his spell. This influence can, in my opinion, be divided into two parts: first, the attitude towards life and reality; second, the theory of poetry, its purpose and its method. Then we shall see how each of these influences fared in the work of a few writers who recognized themselves or who are generally recognized as Baudelairian. I shall limit myself to French literature. Let me merely state here that if an ambitious student of English literature should care to study the legacy in English poetry from Swinburne to T. S. Eliot, I believe his efforts will be richly repaid.

* * * * *

To situate Baudelaire in literary history is no easy matter. Some critics would have him among the Classicists, a less gifted and more morbid Boileau. By his dates and some of his unquestionable qualities he is a Romantic. The Parnassians claim him as a charter member and he is the

[2] *Lettres à sa mère* (5 mars, 1866, ed. Cal-Lévy, 1932), 301.
[3] Arthur Symons, *Figures of Several Centuries* (London, 1916), 311.
[4] Stanislas Fumet, *Notre Baudelaire* (Paris, Plon, 1926), 10-11.

venerable patriarch of the Symbolists. In other words, we are dealing with a big man, one who baffles all attempts at classification. "His comprehensiveness itself makes difficulty," says T. S. Eliot, "for it tempts the partisan critic, even now, to adopt Baudelaire as the patron of his own beliefs."[5] No man can flatter himself that he completely escapes the influence of his times. If it does not enter through the door of submission, it will enter, and sometimes much more effectively, through that of opposition and reaction. Baudelaire has no use for Lamartine and he positively despises Musset. He sings the praises of Hugo in public, but in his private notes the tone has changed considerably. "Hugo often thinks of Prometheus. He applies an imaginary vulture to his breast which suffers only from the ulcers of vanity. Then the hallucination growing more complicated and varied, though following the progressive development described by the doctors, he thinks that, by a *fiat* of Providence, Saint Helena has taken the place of Jersey. This man has about him so little of the elegiac and the ethereal that he would horrify even a notary."[6] George Sand exasperates him almost beyond words: "She is stupid, she is clumsy, she talks too much. She has, in moral ideas, the same depth of judgment and the same delicacy of sentiment as you will find among the concierges . . . . She has good reasons for wanting to suppress hell . . . . I can never think of that stupid creature without trembling with horror."[7] These are among the more quotable passages. It is in those who are called the minor Romantic poets that Baudelaire recognizes his forbears; in his unfortunate friend, Gérard de Nerval, in Aloysius Bertrand whose *Gaspard de la nuit* suggested his own *Spleen de Paris*, in some of the poems of Sainte-Beuve. The latter claims that his *Poésies de Joseph Delorme* are the *Flowers of Evil* of yesterday. Which is all very well, as Thibaudet remarks, provided you do not forget that yesterday's flowers go half price.

In Baudelaire we find many things that remind us of the days of the Cénacles and the Bataille d'Hernani. In his poetry there is much talk of Baudelaire, of death, of religious themes, and the *amor durus* of the Romanticists is very prevalent. But all these themes are transformed from within. His life and his work are permeated with a *mal du siècle* before which the rhetorical complaints of René and the sentimental sobs of Musset are very feeble indeed. Yet he is so different from the four great exponents of Romantic poetry that only on reflection can a resemblance be discovered. Romanticism was a literature of escape. Its very purpose was to create a world that would permit one to get away from what was considered the hideous world of reality. The more "unreal" this dream world, the better it would serve their purpose. Baudelaire had no illusions as to the value of the society of his day, and he too would have the poet lead the way to a nobler life. But, instead of creating a world of illusion,

[5]T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays, 1917-1932* (London, Faber & Faber, 1932), 367.
[6]*Journaux intimes (Fusées)* (Paris, Mercure), 94.
[7]*Mon Cœur mis à nu* (Paris, Picart), 21-2.

he invites the artist to plunge more deeply into reality to discover there the beauty which lies hidden from the coarser vision of the average man. Not that there is much in common between him and those who later called themselves Naturalists, vowed to the service of reality. Brunetière has accused Zola and his followers of usurping a title which belonged rightfully to Molière, Pascal, and Bossuet rather than to the authors of *Germinie Lacerteux*, *L'Assommoir*, and *Les Sœurs Vatard*. His only error here was that he perhaps placed too much confidence in his beloved Classicists. The nineteenth-century Naturalists accepted Taine's invitation to become the field-workers of the recently discovered science of sociology. By thus placing their art in the service of a philosophy ruled by the positivism of Auguste Comte, the determinism of Taine, and the materialism of triumphant mathematico-physical science, these so-called Realists began by limiting reality. That only will be real which can be seen and handled and measured. With this kind of realism Baudelaire would have had nothing to do. The world which the poet wants to use as his field and the object of his work is the world as it really is, a world which the human intelligence only partly understands, a world in which the spiritual element is far more important than the material, a world which bears in its reality an increasingly heavy burden of sin and the consequences of sin. Here is civilization as described in *Mon Cœur mis à nu:* "Theory of true civilization. It does not consist in gas, nor in steam, nor in table turning. It consists in lessening the results of original sin."[8] It is not difficult to pick flaws in Baudelaire's conception of man and the world. It smacks of the Jansenist and the Manichee. But this must at least be said in his favour: he places no *a priori* limitations to reality and claims no psychological rights against the ontological order.

The Romantic love of external nature finds no echo in the soul of Baudelaire. In a letter to Fernand Desnoyers in 1855 he writes: "You ask me for some poetry . . . poetry about nature, no doubt? About the woods, the great oaks, verdure, the insects,—the sun, I suppose? But you know very well that I am incapable of arousing emotion over vegetation, and that my soul rebels against this strange new religion, which, it seems to me, will always be somewhat *shocking* to every *spiritual* being. I shall never believe that *the soul of the Gods dwells in the plants*, and, even if it did, I should care very little."[9] Nor is Baudelaire interested in social man, or the noble deeds of man in history. The centre of the stage will always be filled by the human individual of his own day, his destiny, and the means at his disposal to satisfy the elemental craving that is bedded in the very fibre of the human heart, his desire for happiness. Moreover this modern man is the man of the large city, the Parisian whom Baudelaire knew: "Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère," who differs from Baudelaire only because the latter possesses a lucidity that refuses to leave him even in the midst of every form of intoxication. The picture he gives us of this

[8] *Ibid.*, 36-7. [9] *Lettres* (Paris, Mercure, 1907), 72.

modern man is a very dark one. He is evidently someone fallen from a high estate, unable to forget in his misery the noble calling for which he was created, and blindly seeking to make his way against overwhelming odds. Not only is he the stamping ground of every form of vice, actually or potentially, he is also the victim of "thrice great Satan." And for Baudelaire the devil is by no means the popular figure of the comic strip, not even the Faustian Mephistopheles, and much less the silly invention of Anatole France. He is very much the Satan of Christian revelation, a formidable person who, though he has forfeited his heavenly prerogatives, has lost none of the powers of his angelic nature. There are dozens of passages to substantiate this, and it will be evident to all but those who start with the assumption that every time Baudelaire turns to Christianity he has his tongue in his cheek and is indulging in what Brunetière calls his mania for mystification. It is Satan then who makes it his business "to lull his victim on the pillow of evil and quietly vaporize the rich metal of his will." The result is a gradual and increasingly unconscious progress in the direction of eternal damnation, the patient being quite impervious to the horror of his real situation:

> C'est le Diable qui tient les fils qui nous remuent!
> Aux objets répugnants nous trouvons des appas;
> Chaque jour vers l'Enfer nous descendons d'un pas,
> Sans horreur, à travers des ténèbres qui puent.[10]

The first result of such a conviction is a state of soul for which the English language has yet to coin a word. The French call it "ennui." It admits of degrees and attains its maximum of virulence only when it occupies the entire horizon of a human life, when its object is not something in human life but human life itself. Paul Valéry has attempted a description if not a definition: "I mean . . . not a passing ennui, not the ennui that is due to fatigue, nor the ennui whose germ we can see, nor that whose limits we know; but that perfect ennui, that pure ennui which has as its source neither misfortune nor infirmity and which can be found in the most fortunate of conditions,—this ennui, in fine, which has no other substance than life itself, and no other second cause than the clear sightedness of the one who lives it. This absolute ennui is nothing but life laid bare, when you see it as it is."[11] But I doubt if anyone in any language has ever equalled the description of ennui which we find in Baudelaire. His very heart becomes a muffled drum that knows no measure but the funeral march:

> Loin des sépultures célèbres,
> Vers un cimetière isolé,
> Mon cœur comme un tambour voilé,
> Va battant des marches funèbres.[12]

And this cannot be attributed to literary artifice. If there ever was a poet

[10] *Les Fleurs du mal*, "Préface."
[11] Paul Valery, *L'Ame et la danse* (N.R.F., 1931), 46-7.
[12] *Les Fleurs du mal*, "Le Guignon."

"who knew not seems," it was Charles Baudelaire. Sometimes the picture reaches a frenzy that is positively nightmarish:

> Moi, mon âme est fêlée, et lorsqu'en ses ennuis
> Elle veut de ses chants peupler l'air froid des nuits,
> Il arrive souvent que sa voix affaiblie
> Semble le râle épais d'un blessé qu'on oublie
> Au bord d'un lac de sang, sous un grand tas de morts,
> Et qui meurt, sans bouger, dans d'immenses efforts.[13]

When he carries this into the supernatural, Baudelaire gives us the kind of confession which we might expect in the torture chambers of the Gestapo, that scream of pain which he entitles *Reniement de saint Pierre*, and the rather childish ranting of the *Litanies de Satan*. Critics who persist in quoting these poems as evidence of Baudelaire's devil-worship should really learn to read. Or have they never seen a man at grips with overwhelming grief or pain? Thoughts such as these can come to any man. Most people hasten to disown them as soon as they gain control over themselves. Baudelaire on the contrary, will treasure them, not as a reasoned conviction, but simply because they happened and they express a moment in his life.

But in the midst of all this darkness Baudelaire discovers a bright light and, with superb disdain for logic, the light rises from the very depths of the darkness. Suffering which can be such a crushing thing can, when it is understood and properly used, become at once the evidence of man's true dignity and an efficacious means to prevent man from remaining undisturbed in the mire of his degradation. No matter how low man may have fallen, he has always found some genius to bear witness to his noble destiny. Such men are the *Beacons* of humanity; men like Rembrandt and Michelangelo, Goya and Delacroix, who know life too well to be attracted by its pleasures:

> Car c'est vraiment, Seigneur, le meilleur témoignage
> Que nous puissions donner de notre dignité
> Que cet ardent sanglot qui roule d'âge en âge
> Et vient mourir au bord de votre éternité.[14]

Instead of the "ardent sanglot" of the third line, the first edition reads:

> Que ce long hurlement qui roule d'âge en âge.

Here too man will find the one great remedy for his despair, the redeeming power of suffering:

> Soyez béni, mon Dieu, qui donnez la souffrance
> Comme un divin remède à nos impuretés,
> Et comme la meilleure et la plus pure essence
> Qui prépare les forts aux saintes voluptés![15]

In his later years, but before he was stricken by a pitiless ailment, Baudelaire returned to this subject and gave us what is, in my opinion, the most beautiful poem he ever wrote, *Recueillement*. Suffering is here a cherished companion, a little troublesome, but not the less dear since it saves him

[13] *Ibid.*, "La Cloche fêlée." [14] *Ibid.*, "Les Phares." [15] *Ibid.*, "Bénédiction."

from the fate of those who live but for this life, under the ceaseless lash of pleasure, the pitiless tyrant who drives his victims to gather remorse in slavish feasting.

When *Les Fleurs du mal* appeared in 1857 there was an immediate scandal and a lawsuit followed hard on publication. Author and publisher were found guilty and fined as having offended against public morality. Even among friendly critics there were few who saw all the implications of this powerful work. Hugo's oft quoted pontifical pronouncement, the "frisson nouveau," was about as profound as could well be expected from the Exile of Guernesey. Not the least of the book's claims to Hugo's admiration was the fact that it had incurred the condemnation of a tribunal of Napoléon le Petit. As he said, a condemnation was the only worth-while distinction this government could confer. But there was one writer who looked a little farther. It was Barbey d'Aurevilly, a man who had the gift of making at times some remarkably profound judgments well beyond his general level. "After les Fleurs du mal," he wrote, "there are only two roads open to the poet who brought them to bloom: to blow out his brains —or become Christian."[16] And for both Barbey and Baudelaire, the word "Christian" had a much more thoroughgoing meaning than the diluted *ersatz* so common in his day—and in ours.

This judgment of man and society falling into the hands of the far less intelligent and artistic Lautréamont became a furious diatribe against all morality. Maldoror, equipped with preternatural powers, uses these to revel in an exasperation of crime, in wild rebellion against man and his Creator. "My poetry will consist in nothing but attacking, by every means, man, that wild beast and the Creator, who never should have engendered such vermin. Volumes will be heaped upon volumes till the end of my life and still, this one only idea will appear in them, always present to my conscience."[17] This is in 1869 just two years after the death of Baudelaire. I mention it here because, as is well known, every well-bred Surrealist must have his Lautréamont at his finger tips.

At the same time another strange genius was at work, just as strange as Lautréamont but a much greater genius. His name was Arthur Rimbaud and he was destined to exercise over French poetry an influence second only to that of Baudelaire, an influence that was slow to ripen but which has borne abundant fruit, some of it extremely poisonous. We shall return later to the positive side of his genius. For the moment let us look at the negative and destructive attitude without which it would be impossible to understand what he was trying to do. We should then have to dismiss him, as some critics have done, merely as a subject for the psychiatrist. Professor Marcel Raymond in his splendid book, *De Baudelaire au Surréalisme*, has given us a good summary of this side of Rimbaud.

[16] *Les Fleurs du mal* (ed. Cal-Lévy, 1892), 376.
[17] Lautréamont, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris, 1938), 62.

The demon of Rimbaud is that of revolt and destruction. "The assassins' hour" has begun for him. It is on what is called civilization and Western man that he first intends to leap like a beast of prey. The State, public order and the restraints it imposes, "solid happiness," the conventional run of love and the family, Christianity, morality—in short all the *products of the human spirit* he denies and ridicules. What should be destroyed is the very root of the evil, the human spirit itself, such as it has been formed in the course of the centuries. Can we possibly recognize in it anything but a spontaneity that has been imprisoned? That it might act usefully, the spirit has agreed to give itself limitations, constraints, a form, a logic—(and in so doing) it has agreed to break the ties that bound it to universal life, to live *apart*, to lose its vitality.[18]

This position was adopted later by the Surrealists who maintained and, I believe, still do, that universal happiness can yet be achieved but can only be built on the ruins of modern society and of Christian morality. If this needed any proof, it was made abundantly evident by the publication of a group of articles edited by Herbert Read in 1936. Among many others, here is one of the gems from the pen of Paul Éluard: "Christian morality, which, as we often have to admit to our despair and shame, is not yet done with, is no more than a mockery. All the appetites of the imaginative body revolt against it. How much longer must we clamour, struggle and weep before the figures of love become those of facility and freedom?"[19]

The legacy of Baudelaire appears in a different form and with quite different results in the life and work of Joris-Karl Huysmans. He was one of the favourite disciples of Zola, an *habitué* of the Soirées de Médan. His early work is entirely in harmony with the programme of the chief of the Naturalists. In 1884 something happened which he never succeeded in explaining to his own satisfaction. He wrote *A Rebours*, a novel quite unheralded by anything in his previous work. Twenty years later he could write: "A Rebours broke with all the former novels, with Les Sœurs Vatard, En Ménage, A Vau-l'eau, it set me squarely on a path whose end I did not even guess. More shrewd than the Catholics, Zola realized it well."[20] And Zola protested vigorously that he was being betrayed, but all to no avail. The prodigal son had left his father's home, but he never could find the way back. And Huysmans adds in 1903: "What is more striking is this: all the novels I have written since *A Rebours* are virtually contained in this book."[21] To explain this breach with his friend by his subsequent conversion to Catholicism, besides being anachronistic, is quite unsatisfactory. Again let me invoke his own testimony:

I was not brought up in a Catholic school, but in a lycée, I was never pious in my youth, and the memories of childhood, of first communion, of education which so often play a great role in a conversion, had nothing to do with mine. And what still further complicates the difficulty and defies all analysis, when I wrote A Rebours, I was not setting foot in any church, I knew no practical Catholics, no priests; I experienced no divine

[18] M. Raymond, *De Baudelaire au Surréalisme* (Paris, 1933), 39.

[19] Paul Éluard, "Poetic Evidence" (*Surrealism*, ed. Herbert Read, London, Faber & Faber, 1936, 177).

[20] J.-K. Huysmans, *A Rebours* (ed. Crès, 1903), xxii.

[21] *Ibid.*, xiv.

attraction drawing me to the Church, I was living peacefully in my trough; it seemed to me quite natural to satisfy all the desires of my senses, and it did not even occur to me that this kind of entertainment was forbidden.[22]

This testimony serves to make very mysterious the last lines of this strange book in which the author, after conjuring up the wildest plans for reaching happiness, seems to drop his arms in despair like the drowning man who simply cannot swim another stroke: "O Lord, have pity on the Christian who doubts, on the unbeliever who wants to believe, on the prisoner of life who embarks alone, in the night, beneath a sky where no longer shine the consoling beacons of the ancient hope."[23] Once more it was Barbey d'Aurevilly who saw the implications. He recalls what he had written to Baudelaire after *Les Fleurs du mal* and tells Huysmans that, after *A Rebours*, he too has his back against the wall, with only two alternatives facing him: the barrel of a revolver and the foot of the Cross. In the preface to the 1903 edition of *A Rebours*, the author replied to him: "The choice has been made."

We shall now consider another case where the legacy of Baudelaire has played an important, if secondary, role: the very extraordinary career of one who is, at least in my opinion, one of the greatest poets of modern times, M. Paul Claudel. To him Georges Bernanos has paid this glowing tribute: "He has given to a whole generation what he claims he received from Rimbaud: 'the living and almost physical impression of the supernatural.' Admiration here draws back and yields the place to a sentiment of boundless gratitude."[24] He was born in 1868 so that his boyhood and adolescence were spent in the intellectual atmosphere of Hypolite Taine, Ernest Renan, and laboratory science raised to the status of an all-embracing religion. The political arena was dominated by the Fathers of the Third Republic, by Gambetta and the spirit of "la revanche." In literature the Naturalists were holding up as the model of all art the quasi-photographic reproduction of material reality. Years after, Claudel was to pass severe judgment on all this: "Just recall those sad years of the eighties, the period of the full flowering of naturalistic literature. Never did the reign of matter seem more securely established. Everything that had a name in art, in science and in literature was irreligious. All the (self-styled) great men of the finishing century were particularly distinguished for their hostility to the Church. Renan reigned. He presided at the last Commencement exercises I attended at the lycée Louis-le-Grand, . . . Victor Hugo had just disappeared in an apotheosis."[25] In this dark dungeon two rays of light broke through; both were unexpected and unsought. In the spring of 1886 appeared those strange *Illuminations* of Rimbaud, published by his greatest admirer, Paul Verlaine. On Christmas day of the same year occurred the mysterious and upsetting experience at Notre-Dame in Paris.

[22] *Ibid.*, xxiv-v. [23] *Ibid.*, 337.

[24] F. Lefèvre, *Georges Bernanos* (Paris, 1926), 79.

[25] Paul Claudel, "Ma Conversion" (Paris, *La Revue des Jeunes*, 10 oct., 1913, 34).

He has given us a striking account of that event. After telling us how very dissatisfied he had grown with his life and its surroundings, he continues:

> Such was the unhappy child who, on December 25th, 1886, went to Notre-Dame to assist at the office of Christmas. At that time I was beginning to write and it seemed to me that the Catholic ceremonial, if considered from the vantage point of a superior dilettantism, might offer me a stimulant appropriate to certain decadent experiments. It was in such dispositions that, elbowed and pushed around by the crowd, I assisted at High Mass with mediocre pleasure. Then, having nothing else to do, I came back to Vespers . . . and it was then that occurred the event that dominates my whole life. In an instant my heart was touched and I believed. I believed with such force of adhesion, with such an uplifting of my whole being, with so powerful a conviction, with such certitude leaving no room for any kind of doubt, that since then, all the books, all the arguments, all the chance happenings of a busy life have been powerless to shake my faith or, indeed, to even touch it.[26]

Those who have met Paul Claudel, with his rugged peasant physique, his solid common sense, his wholesome awareness of reality, will quickly dismiss any attempt to explain either of these incidents by an appeal to hypersensibility or hysterical hallucination. However the problem is not the subject of this discussion. For those who accept God and the grace of God as realities, there is no problem; for the rest, I fear the problem must remain insoluble. In any case, it is a question that transcends all literature and all art. What interests us today is the role which Baudelaire plays in the intellectual and artistic development of this extraordinary poet. For Claudel, Baudelaire is unquestionably the greatest French poet of the nineteenth century; and the only serious rival he admits in any literature of the same period is Edgar Allan Poe. For him, Baudelaire is the man who stuck pins in the toy balloons of the Romanticists and turned poetry in the direction of integral truth and reality. But it is rather through its exasperated form in Rimbaud that the Baudelairian influence reached Claudel:

> Rimbaud has been the capital influence in my life. Others, and particularly Shakespeare, Eschylus, Dante and Dostoievsky have been my masters and have shown me the secrets of my art. But Rimbaud alone has exercised an influence which I shall call seminal and paternal and which makes me really believe in generation in the order of spirits as well as in that of bodies. I shall always remember that morning of June, 1886 when I bought that little issue of *La Vogue* which contained the beginning of *Les Illuminations*. It was really an illumination for me. I was at last emerging from the hideous world of Taine and Renan and the other Molochs of the nineteenth century, from that dungeon, from that awful mechanical world entirely governed by perfectly inflexible laws and, which was the limit of the horrible, laws that were knowable and teachable . . . I had the revelation of the supernatural.[27]

Till he became acquainted with the precocious genius from Charleville, Claudel knew the author of *Les Fleurs du mal* chiefly as a craftsman whom the Parnassians claimed as their own and from this type of art he himself was to stray very far. But when he read *Les Illuminations* it was the Baudelaire and the Rimbaud *voyants* that came into his life—with this

[26] *Ibid.*, 52-3.

[27] Paul Claudel, *Correspondance avec Jacques Rivière* (Paris, Plon, 1926), 142-3.

important difference, however, that whereas they, especially Rimbaud, had spent most of their energy hurling invective at what was crushing the very life of poetry and had seen only vaguely or not at all how this life could flourish once it was liberated, Claudel discovered from another source a road by which the Muse could find her way into her full domain and there exercise an undisputed sway. It was by calling in a long forgotten ally, herself a Muse in her own right, one who would be in no way a usurper but a faithful co-worker, La Muse qui s'appelle la Grâce.[28] This kind of collaboration had happened before, though not very often. But, when it did, the result was such things as the *Llama de Amor Viva* and the *Cántico Espiritual* of San Juan de la Cruz, and surely these represent a peak in all human art. And something else has happened. For the first time since Dante, as Charles Dubos has shown,[29] a great poet achieved within his work a unity between the author, the man, and the Christian. This is not a question of literary superiority. Great works have been produced without this unity, or rather in spite of the lack of it; they would be greater if it were present. The Classicists hovering between a theocentric and an anthropocentric conception of reality had clouded the issue by creating an artificial and a false unity; the rationalists of the eighteenth century and the Naturalists of the nineteenth had lost it by denying a whole section of reality, and the Romanticists despised reality to live in a fantastic dream world of their own creation.[30] Whatever may be our opinion of the poetic genius of Paul Claudel, it is hard to see how it can be denied that he has established an harmonious unity between himself, his art, and his faith.

* * * * *

Let us turn now to the second part of this study: Baudelaire's theory of poetry and its survival and metamorphoses in some of those who followed him. And here it may not be amiss to lay down two principles without which everything that follows would be, for me at least, quite meaningless and Baudelaire would not be worth studying. First: there is an order of reality quite independent of the psychological order and from which the latter can deviate only by falling into error. Second: there is such a thing as truth, i.e., a co-incidence of the psychological order with the order of reality, and against truth no one has any rights. It is an absolute and admits of no relativity. No amount of sincerity, be it ever so respectable, can free a man from its dominion. To some this preamble may seem quite unnecessary but those who are in touch with contemporary philosophy will realize that these principles fall far short of universal acceptance.

[28]Paul Claudel, *Cinq grandes Odes* (N.R.F., 1913), 117-46.

[29]Charles Dubos, *Approximations* (Paris, Corrêa, 1934), VI, 254-7.

[30]The only two writers who might seriously challenge this thesis are Shakespeare and Dostoievsky. Nicholas Berdiaeff, in his study on Dostoievsky, has shown how this unity is lacking in Shakespeare. His attempt to show its presence in Dostoievsky has been less felicitous.

In his important essay on "The Function of Criticism," in 1923, Mr. T. S. Eliot offers the following interpretation of literary development:

> The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for the order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature, will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as the present is directed by the past.[31]

Some of these alterations have been very profound, e.g., that begun by the Pléiade in the sixteenth century and perfected by the great geniuses of the seventeenth, or that of the Romanticists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is quite possible that, once sufficient perspective has been reached, the revolution we find in Baudelaire may be recognized as more radical, more pregnant with consequences than any which have preceded it. A careful study of his poetry and his critical work makes it hard to shake off the impression that poetry is here starting on a completely new track, and the results of this are still evolving. No longer can poetry be a mere urbane recreation. It is as though a mock battle had been going on with toy pistols and wooden swords, and suddenly someone steps in with a real pistol and a real sword and announces, to the general consternation: "Now we are playing for keeps." The nature and importance of this revolution have been best called to our attention in recent years by the profound and illuminating, if not easy, studies of M. Jacques Maritain, and it is to him that I am indebted for most of what follows.

According to Maritain, what happened in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially through Baudelaire and Rimbaud, is that, for the first time among the poets and the artists, poetry became aware of itself as poetry. The word itself will take on a new meaning. It is derived from a Greek word that simply means "to make" and as such is quite synonymous with art as that word was understood by St. Thomas Aquinas and the other Scholastics, i.e., the *recta ratio factibilium*, the right way of making things. Then poetry became merely a kind of art distinguished from painting or sculpture among the fine arts, which in turn separated themselves from the so-called "useful" arts. Thus a sharp distinction arose between the artisan and the artist, to their mutual loss. Now poetry (for Baudelaire it is still *le beau* or *la beauté*) will designate something which is to be found in every good work of art, whether it be painting or sculpture or music or literature; the differentiating agent will be the medium through which the poetry finds its external expression. Poetry is something that is living alike in a symphony of Beethoven, the Sistine Madonna, the Moses of Michelangelo, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. It is of the very essence of all these, ontologically anterior to the masterpiece, though not revealed, even

[31] Eliot, *Selected Essays, 1917-1932*, 23.

to its creator, except through and by the masterpiece. It may be called knowledge, if it be well understood that knowledge is an analogical term that differs a great deal in its various analogates. Without going too far into the obscure regions of epistemology, let us note that poetic knowledge is quite different from what we usually understand by knowledge. It is not a knowledge that is expressible in a mental image, a concept, a logical sentence. If we use the word "idea" in its connection, we must use it not as the completion of conscious knowledge but the germ that virtually contains the work of art and leads to it. The poetic experience belongs to what philosophers and theologians in their respective spheres call *knowledge by connaturality;* a knowledge that is begotten of a certain similarity between the knower and the known without going through the complicated process of discursive reasoning or even without the intervention of a concept. For example, you have the accurate judgment on a moral question by a virtuous man, simply because he is a virtuous man, without any knowledge of ethics or moral theology, or on a higher plane, the knowledge of God described by St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, a wisdom that blossoms from the theological virtue of charity and which no amount of purely human effort would ever achieve. Poetic knowledge has this peculiarity that its purpose is not primarily to know, but to make. It is directed essentially to the existence of a work of art, finds its expression in a work of art just as the mental image—the *species impressa* of the Scholastics—finds its expression in the concept or the *verbum mentis*. We shall return in a moment to this important characteristic. When the physicist or the metaphysician set to work on an object of their respective sciences, they are forced to strip it of many things which play an important role in human life. What does it matter to the physicist, as physicist, that vessels were wrecked or men injured in the discovery of Bernoulli's principle, or that the careful study of striated surfaces has spoiled the mysterious communications that used to come from the close application of the ear to a sea shell? How do you suppose the metaphysician would react if he were told that the principle of contradiction has wrecked many a dream of youth? The poet, as such, cares for neither physics nor metaphysics. It is his business to seize the human experience in its inchoate form, often at the cost of the sureness and universality dear to metaphysics and of the accurate measurement of mathematico-physical science. And so the poet, speaking of Mandalay, will boldly announce that: "The sun comes up like thunder out'er China across the bay"; twenty-five thousand miles across the bay, remarks the merciless geographer. And Baudelaire will say that the sun went down in its own clotting blood, in defiance of Copernicus and the medical school and common sense. Let the metaphysician and the scientist seek their truth, the moral theologian his principles and rules of conduct. The poet, as poet, deals with beauty. If he is a great poet, he will reach truth and moral goodness according to the keenness of his own intelligence, because these are ontologically identical with beauty.

Let us turn now to Baudelaire to see what application of all this can be found in his work. He had a very keen sense of the beautiful and a veritable hunger for it. Since he was also very intelligent, though he might be lured for a time by spurious appearances, he could not long be deceived by them. He could no more tear himself away from his quest for beauty than a hungry man can help desiring food. But he wanted it in its very quintessence, as something absolute and, wherever he turned at its call, he would find it so alloyed that, after the experience, he would find himself "plus seul, plus abandonné"; more lonely, more abandoned. But he was powerless to resist the next temptation to seek an artificial paradise. Then intellectual problems come to exasperate his esthetic longings. What is this beauty, this essential poetry? Where does it come from? How does it exercise its tyrannical dominion over the heart of man with so little care for results?

> Tes baisers sont un philtre et ta bouche une amphore
> Qui font le héros lâche et l'enfant courageux.
> Tu sèmes au hasard la joie et les désastres,
> Et tu gouvernes tout et ne réponds de rien.[32]

What does it matter, concludes the poet, whether beauty comes from heaven or from hell, "provided it gives me access to an infinite which I love and have never known"? But the conclusion can only be momentary. The man who aims to still the longings of his heart by means of beauty, such as he finds it here, is doomed to bitter disappointment. The farther he goes in his quest, the more his prey eludes him until he is forced to admit defeat: "And now the depth of the heavens frightens me; their limpidity exasperates me. The insensibility of the sea, the unchanging scene revolts me .... Ah, must I suffer forever, or forever flee beauty? Nature, pitiless enchantress, ever victorious rival, leave me! Stop tempting my desires and my pride! The study of beauty is a duel in which the artist screams with fright before being vanquished."[33] All Baudelaire's attempts to quench his thirst for beauty ended in this way.

If you would escape the lot of what Mallarmé calls "le bétail humain," then life must be raised to a higher pitch; you must put yourself in a permanent state of intoxication: "You must always be intoxicated. Everything lies there; that is the one question. That you may not feel the horrible burden of Time that crushes your shoulders and bows you to the earth, you must be ceaselessly intoxicated. But with what? With wine, with poetry or with virtue, as you wish. But 'enivrez-vous,' become intoxicated."[34] Then Baudelaire submits his experiments in drugs, in love, carnal and ethereal, in sin; the conclusion is always the same: the complete enjoyment of beauty is denied man in this life and the transitory glimpses we catch of it can only serve to whet the desire for that which

[32] *Les Fleurs du mal*, "Hymne à la Beauté."
[33] *Petits Poèmes en prose*, "Confitéor de l'Artiste."
[34] *Ibid.*, "Enivrez-vous."

can only be had beyond the grave. In his *Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe*, Baudelaire gives us a clear statement of his conviction on that subject.[35]

> It is this admirable, this immortal instinct for Beauty which makes us consider the earth and its spectacles as a glimpse, as a *correspondence* of Heaven. The insatiable thirst for everything which lies beyond, and which life reveals, is the most living proof of our immortality. It is at once by poetry and *through* poetry, by and *through* music, that the soul catches sight of the splendours that lie beyond the grave; and when an exquisite poem brings tears to our eyes, these tears are not evidence of an excess of joy, they are far more the testimony of an irritated melancholy, the nervous postulation of a nature exiled in imperfection, which wants to gain possession immediately on the earth itself, of the Paradise of revelation. And so the principle of poetry is strictly and simply the human aspiration toward a superior Beauty, and this principle is revealed in an enthusiasm, an uplifting of the soul; an enthusiasm entirely independent of passion, which is the intoxication of the heart, and of truth which is the food of reason.[36]

It is in the light of this passage that the famous poem "Correspondances" is to be understood.

> La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
> Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
> L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
> Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.[37]

This correspondence between earth and heaven will be perceived differently by different men, or even by different mental functions of the same man. Nature will speak in "clear words" to the scientist, to the philosopher. But the poet alone, in the natural order, and the mystic in the supernatural order, will grasp the "confuses paroles," not by means of ordinary, conceptual, logically expressible knowledge, common to the average man, but by means of poetic knowledge if he is a poet and through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost if he is an authentic mystic. This is obviously pushing the words of Baudelaire beyond his own clear vision, but is it not the characteristic of great poetry to reach much farther than its author knew?

When we turn to Rimbaud's theory of poetry, we meet something which is less wholesome but perhaps more radical and self-destructive. Baudelaire had pointed out that "the feverish passion of art is an ulcer that devours the rest and since the clear absence of exactitude and truth in art means the absence of art, the whole man vanishes; the excessive specialization of a faculty leads to nothingness."[38] No one has ever shown the truth of this statement more convincingly than Rimbaud. He realized it soon enough to escape and save himself, but not without leaving us a living example of the results of such an experiment. In his *Saison en Enfer*, which is his definite farewell to arms at the ripe old age of nineteen, he says: "My health was threatened. Terror would seize me. I used to fall into a deep sleep that would last several days and, once awake, I would continue the saddest dreams." And he adds with disarming simplicity: "Et puis, c'était

[35]This is the passage he is accused of copying from Poe's "The Poetic Principle."
[36]*Art romantique* (Paris, Conard, 1925), 159.
[37]*Les Fleurs du mal*, "Correspondances."
[38]"L'Ecole païenne" (*Art Romantique*, 296).

mal." From the three sources of intoxication suggested by Baudelaire, wine, poetry, and virtue, Rimbaud rules out the last. Virtue takes its place among the "produits humains," which must be done away with if man is to find the key to the enigma of his life. Only one thing matters: man must become a "voyant," a seer. In the famous letter to Izambard in 1871, the precocious boy develops his creed: "I say that one must be a *seer*, must make himself a *seer*, The poet makes himself a *seer* by a long, immense and reasoned *disordering of all his senses*. Every form of love, of suffering, of madness; he searches for and exhausts in himself all the poisons to keep of them nothing but the quintessence. An ineffable torture in which he needs superhuman faith and strength, in which he becomes the greatest of sick men, the greatest criminal, the most accursed—and supreme in his knowledge—because he arrives at the *unknown*."[39] The last step has been taken. Poetry is no longer satisfied with its humble but important role of blossoming in a work of beauty; it wants *to know*. It hurls itself naked and incompetent into the field of knowledge properly so called. On its delicate shoulders now rests the crushing burden of explaining and directing human life in all its labyrinthine complexity. The result has been disastrous not only for poetry but also and especially for those who have accepted the creed.

We have already seen how Claudel used Rimbaud as a stepping-stone and carried his theory to a conclusion which, while quite logical, could hardly have been foreseen by Rimbaud. The Surrealists have carried it in another and, in many ways, opposite direction. I am not discussing here certain technical discoveries which have been or are being tried out and whose value can only be safely estimated after a few more years. I refer to their use of their art as a means of studying and directing human life. With utter contempt for the intellectual, they would, like Prometheus, steal fire from heaven—or hell, it matters little. They use all the means they know to break into the store-house of the sub-conscious in the hope of carrying off some worth-while treasure. Their basic error consists in confusing the obscure world of poetic knowledge with the equally obscure and chaotic world of the instincts and sense impressions. Here they have secured welcome assistance from Freudian psychiatry and its most unfortunate excursions into normal psychology and metaphysics. The great means of the Surrealists is a self-induced passivity, making the poet a kind of disinterested spectator before the spectacle projected from his own uncontrolled imagination. Spiritual writers have long been familiar with this kind of thing and have given a fair estimate of its value. When in 1919, André Breton and his friend Philippe Soupault conducted experiments in automatic writing, they were surprised to discover a strange similarity between their results. It is perhaps true that a common meeting ground can be found in this way, but it lies at a level that can be reached only by abandon

[39]Paterne Berrichon, "Trois Lettres inédites de Rimbaud" (*Nouvelle Revue Française*, VIII, 1912, 572).

ing all traditional human values. As has been said, somewhat cynically, one touch of lubricity makes the whole world kin. Their nauseating insistence on the lascivious should give pause, if not to the Surrealists themselves, at least to those of us who still believe that Plato and Aristotle, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas were not utter fools. It would be crass ignorance or childish prudery to deny that these forces, so dear to the Surrealists, play an important part in human life and therefore in human art. I am quite willing to admit that Mathilda Wesedonk had a part in the creation of *Tristan und Isolde*, but it is a far cry from this admission to defending the artistic merits of adultery. Surrealism still awaits its Baudelaire or its Rimbaud, sufficiently intelligent to see its error and courageous enough to write its epitaph.

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And so the legacy of Baudelaire goes on, giving to poetry and the fine arts an importance greater than they have ever had, with results that are both good and bad. It was inevitable. Every new awakening of human consciousness entails a danger of perversion. Every new tool on which man lays his hands, increasing his power for good, can be used badly because man remains free. Knowing him for what he is, we must expect him to make mistakes. In this particular awakening to the essence of poetry as a kind of knowledge, the danger lay in expecting from it what it can never do. Its function is to bring new beauty into our world and, too often, its beautiful but fragile wings have been loaded with the burdens of metaphysics, of theology, and mysticism. An important step forward has none the less been taken. The intellectual world had been invaded by forces represented by Auguste Comte, Hypolite Taine, and Ernest Renan. They had barred and sealed the door that opens on the spiritual, and boasted that no one would use it again. Baudelaire broke the locks and Rimbaud tore the door from its hinges. Thus, as Maritain describes it: "It is through the experiences of sin and in the grief of despair that the nineteenth century will see spirituality awaken in partibus infidelium: by a Baudelaire, by a Rimbaud. An ambiguous spirituality, good for heaven, if grace takes hold on it, good for hell if pride steps in. Many of our contemporaries will seek in anti-reason and below reason food for their souls which should only be sought above reason."[40] And the work of the professor of literature, though raised in dignity, has become singularly difficult and perilous. His object is literature and literature alone, but if he comes to his task equipped with nothing but literature either he will stay on the surface of his subject or, venturing on unfamiliar paths, he runs the risk of leading to dangerous confusion where truth and order are his goal.

[40]Jacques Maritain, *Le Songe de Descartes* (Paris, Corréa, 1932), 274-5.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE: OLD WORLDS FOR NEW?

J. E. Hodgetts

VOLTAIRE'S injunction, "let us take care of our gardens," appears to have been uppermost in the minds of the delegates representing the leading nations at the San Francisco Conference, for, scarcely a week after the opening ceremonies, the most important delegates returned home to cultivate and fence their own political plots. The exit of the most colourful characters from the stage (use of the San Francisco Opera House justifies this analogy) partly explains the decline of public interest in the proceedings. Moreover, public opinion which has accustomed itself to blitz tactics in war and has been recently satiated with amply illustrated atrocity-stories is far too jaded to retain a continuous and lively interest in the ambling gait of a diplomatic conference. Opinions of the masses, united by the positive, glowing symbols of war, tend to disintegrate when the insipid and often conflicting symbols of peace are substituted. These factors help to explain the pessimism and outright apathy with which many have viewed the proceedings at San Francisco.

The early departure of Molotoff, Eden, T. V. Soong, and Mackenzie King may symbolize to pessimistic spirits the exodus of real authority from the new United Nations organization. One has the impression that the powers of the organization have been so emasculated by the emphasis on regional and often bilateral settlement of disputes—as, for example, through the Act of Chapultepec or the non-aggression pact between France and Russia—that the larger nations felt safe in leaving their subordinates to erect an imposing façade for a powerless international organization. Another pessimistic interpretation of the early departure of the important delegates is that the Big Three, particularly Russia, having insisted as a *sine qua non* that they retain the veto power, could with impunity leave the stage-hands of the Small Powers to paint in the background against which this power would be paraded.

We have been told that the details of world organization have been disregarded at San Francisco in favour of certain broad principles which may serve as the foundation of a new world-order. However, urgent problems of power-politics in Poland, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere have tended to distract attention from these principles. At the same time, with twelve committees discussing separate aspects of the organization and with the sketchy press accounts of their work (much of which was done *in camera*), the main problems have tended to be obscured. It may be useful, therefore, to attempt to clarify some of these problems and examine the solutions (if any) provided at San Francisco.

(1) *The Problem of Flexibility and Peaceful Change.* No international organization can succeed in this dynamic world unless provision is made for flexibility and peaceful change. Human institutions tend to become in-grown and conservative, to look upon themselves, as Burke looked upon the British constitution, as ends rather than means, fixed and unalterable for all time. On the other hand, the physical sciences continue to upset our institutional patterns by producing new machines and new products which in turn create complex social, economic, and political problems. The inventiveness of the social scientist lags behind that of the physical scientist, so that the former is always trying to master the problems created by the latter. His inability to fill this gap is measured by the amount of social friction which is generated; if institutions lag too far behind, this friction produces the spark to set the world aflame in war. In the past, the human and material costs of the failure of the social scientists to fill this gap were negligible, for war was regarded as a brief interruption of normal relationships, and left few scars. Modern wars have shown us, however, that we cannot afford such luxuries even if, as some would have us believe, they bring full employment: the problem of employment is irrelevant if civilization is wiped out! Therefore, it is clear that our present effort to build an international organization is the response to the scientific developments which have "shrunk" the world to such a small compass that it is no longer safe to allow friction to generate in any part of it. Although the creation of more and better machinery is necessary to manage the new world, the organizations which are formed should not be permitted to develop hardening of the arteries: they must be flexible enough to provide in a *peaceful* manner those changes which, in the past, only war has been able to attain.

How was this problem of the dynamic world-community attacked at San Francisco? What provisions for flexibility and peaceful change appear in the new Charter?

In the first place, the test of the flexibility of the organization rests on provisions for expanding it, for at present only the nations who participated in the defeat of the Axis are members. These (some fifty) countries are presumably the "peace loving nations" to which the Dumbarton Oaks proposals refer as qualifying for admission into the world organization. But "peace loving" is a vague concept, particularly when it is interpreted by the Big Five, any one of which could veto the admission of any state. The Polish and Argentinian issues provide concrete illustrations of the difficulties and dangers into which we may expect to be plunged when a country seeks entrance to the new organization. Unless more precise qualifications for entrance are provided, expansion of membership is likely to take place on the basis of political bargaining rather than on some objective criteria of worthiness to join the world-community.

Moreover, until the United Nations organization has been expanded to include all states, it will not be a truly *international* organization, but rather a concert of victorious powers dominated by the Big Three. A world

organization that is something less than universal may prove, as experience with the League of Nations suggests, worse than useless in maintaining a system of collective security. This is not to argue for immediate inclusion of the Axis powers, but merely to indicate the dangers of creating an organization which cannot be readily expanded. It is true that the nations now excluded will be too weak alone to threaten the peace of the world, but the danger lies in the opportunity afforded dissatisfied nations within the organization to ally themselves with the excluded powers. Once this occurs, the international organization, as in the case of the League, provides an illusory source of security to a few trusting nations, while behind the scenes the old game of *realpolitik* and the balancing of power begins to take shape.

Flexibility of the new organization is provided, secondly, by formal amendment procedures. Here the original Dumbarton Oaks proposal, despite the protests of the smaller nations, has been adopted. All amendments must be approved ultimately by the permanent members of the Security Council in accordance with their own constitutional procedures. This rigidity reflects deep-seated suspicions which a war-time partnership has not eradicated. Russia cannot forget that she was read out of the old League; the United States is acutely conscious of her breach with isolationism, so that commitments to the new organization must be carefully hedged with qualifications such as this governing amendment. In short, the Big Three did not want to create a system of organized power only to have it amended over their heads by the numerical voting strength of smaller nations represented in the Assembly.

It appears likely, although it is not definite at time of writing, that a compromise suggested by the Canadian delegates will provide a satisfactory solution to this problem. The proposal is that after seven to ten years' experience with the operation of the new organization a general constitutional convention be summoned to revise the charter. Specific inclusion of this recommendation would prevent us from making the tragic assumption that the charter drawn up at San Francisco is to remain fixed for all time. We must be prepared to modify our institutions to meet the problems of a dynamic world, rather than attempt to compress intractable situations into a rigid institutional mould.

There is a third and most important problem connected with the dynamic aspect of the new organization, namely, the problem of peaceful change. We have been warned on numerous occasions that the conference at San Francisco was not a peace conference, that the peace arrangements would be made later, possibly after a prolonged armistice. This warning serves to point the distinction between the new organization and the old League of Nations, for the latter was part and parcel of the peace negotiations and the various peace treaties. The intimate relation between the League and the peace treaties imposed on the League obligations to protect and preserve the *status quo post bellum*. This obligation might have been

less objectionable if all nations had participated in honouring it; but this was not the case. Even had all nations participated, the preservation of static and hastily arranged peace-provisions was not the appropriate function of an international organization designed to provide for peaceful *change*. Refusal to recognize the necessity for peaceful adjustment of discrepancies in these post-war treaties meant that the changes were eventually made by force outside the League. In the meantime the League was so thoroughly discredited as a collective security agent that it could obtain no real support in its belated efforts to check aggressors who were determined to alter the peace treaties.

It is suggested that a separation of the new organization from the peace treaties cannot be guaranteed merely by drawing them up independent of one another. In fact, it is more than likely, since all treaties will be registered with the new organization, that the United Nations will become responsible for upholding the *status quo* in this post-war period, just as the League was compelled to assume a similar responsibility after the last war.

Under these circumstances there are two ways in which the new organization could provide for peaceful change. The first was embodied in a proposal of the American delegates (the fate of which is not known at time of writing) which would give the Assembly authority to reconsider all treaties. (This authority may be assumed from the concession by the Big Five to the Assembly of the power to consider any question but a dispute already pending before the Council.) Russia objected to this proposal because it might induce the excluded Axis powers to lobby members of the Assembly and perhaps produce changes in the treaties long before Germany and the others had expiated their sins or (more important) paid their reparations.

The Russian counterproposal (strongly seconded by France) was that the peace treaties should be enforced *outside* the United Nations organization by means of the defensive pacts already in existence—as, for example, between Britain and Russia, France and Russia, and so forth. This suggestion raised one of the most serious problems with which the delegates had to grapple: the relation of regional pacts to the general organization. Once the Russian proposal seemed likely to succeed, the Latin-American countries insisted on similar independence of action under the Pan-American system and, in particular, the security provisions of the Act of Chapultepec.

There is an obvious case for both the Russian and Latin-American contention, for any one of the permanent members of the Security Council could veto any action proposed for handling an aggressor, thus blocking self-defensive measures or regional settlement of the dispute.

The solution finally adopted (or so it appears at time of writing) was an American compromise according to which regional action—as, for example, by the Pan-American Union against one of its own members—could be taken immediately, subject to ultimate approval by the Security Council. Provision for this *ex post facto* approval suggests that the forthcoming

peace treaties will be policed, not by the Security Council, but by groups of powers working under bilateral or multilateral pacts. Great Britain and most of the Dominions objected to this stress on quasi-independent settlement of disputes on a regional basis. This alteration in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals (which specifically subordinated all regional arrangements to the Security Council) may eliminate the danger of making the new organization responsible for perpetuating the *status quo* after the war, but it may also eliminate the Security Council as an effective peace-enforcing instrument.

(2) *The Problem of the Peace Producers.* The production of peace appears at first glance to be a function of the Big Powers alone. If by peace we mean absence of war this view seems unobjectionable. This purely negative approach towards peace arises from the emphasis we place on security in the immediate post-war period of crisis. But this short-sighted pursuit of security at all costs should not make us forget the long-run objectives of a world-society. Peace must also include the positive aspects of human welfare and social justice, if it is to have any meaning at all. Indeed, without such objectives, it will be impossible to achieve even the negative aspect of peace—absence of war.

At San Francisco, although security has been regarded as the dominant theme, there have been signs that the delegates were not unconscious of the desirability of laying the basis for the more positive elements of human welfare and justice. As the crisis abates we may hope to find decreasing interest in the security functions of the organization and more concern for building up the positive elements of peace.

However, the Big Three leave us with no illusions concerning their desire to monopolize the production of security. The smaller powers have sought to break down this monopoly with the instinctive fear that has led reformers at home to attempt to "bust the trusts." Monopoly in the production and marketing of security has the same objectionable features as monopoly in any enterprise: it is bad for the producers, for they lose sight of the public interest, and it is hard on the "consumers," for their own needs are seldom consulted and they must usually pay excessively for what they receive.

The long deadlock over the question of the veto-power of the permanent members of the Council reflects this distrust of monopoly in the international security market. It also reflects the failure to appreciate the true position of the Council as only one—although at this time, the most important—of a number of functional agents, its main function being to provide the basis for achieving the positive objectives of peace. If the Council sticks to its security-producing functions and does not trespass on the other functional agents, much of the present opposition to the Big Three veto-power should disappear.

Perhaps, also, these objections appear because we have been expecting

too much, considering our relative immaturity in the sphere of international government. We tend (particularly the proponents of world federation) to transfer by analogy domestic constitutional procedures to the international arena; but nationalism and sovereignty will, for many years, obstruct efforts to make this transfer more than an idealist's dream on paper. However, the naked recognition of force on the Security Council rubs the Anglo-Saxon especially, because he has been brought up in the tradition that force should be decently clothed in garments of law and justice. It seems logical, therefore, that similar garments be provided for an international agency. Cold facts, however, must lead us to the conclusion that in the international sphere we are several centuries behind domestic developments, so that for a time we must acquiesce in a blunt and forthright use of force which we would not tolerate in our own countries.

What hope is there, given these conditions, for developing the positive elements of peace—justice and welfare?

Some measure of comfort can be drawn from the preamble of the Charter (supposedly influenced by General Smuts) which places on record the highest ideals of law and justice as guides for the new organization. The prospective creation, under the Social and Economic Council, of a committee on human rights marks further recognition of these ideals.

The agencies through which these ideals will materialize are the Assembly, the World Court, the Economic and Social Council (together with all its subordinate bodies still to be set up), and the trustee system.

Many efforts were made by the Small Powers, particularly New Zealand, to increase the powers of the Assembly. In the main these efforts were directed towards increasing the Assembly's influence over the production of security, rather than in the production of welfare and justice. Their efforts were doomed by the unshakable determination of the Big Powers to retain a virtual monopoly in this area.

It would be a mistake to look on the Assembly as a world law-making body. Many idealists lost faith in the original League Assembly because they expected it to become an international legislature. The Assembly at present will have to content itself with examining and criticizing the reports of the Security Council and making recommendations, not so much on security matters, but on economic and social problems. The power of the Assembly to examine almost any matter except a dispute already in the hands of the Council makes it a focal point for criticism and suggestion by the smaller powers. In this respect its function will tend to follow the trend noticeable in the legislatures of all democratic countries: the executive, rather than the legislature is today the chief initiator of policy, while parliament becomes a forum for debate and criticism.

The new World Court is modelled closely after the Permanent Court of International Justice. It seems probable (although it is not known at time of writing) that the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court for which jurists have been pressing is not likely to be expanded. One concession made by

the Big Three is that their veto power will not be exercised in the election of judges to the court. This is one instance where the security function of the Council should not trespass on the judicial aspects of the court.

The Economic and Social Council, consisting of eighteen members elected (according to a Canadian amendment) for staggered three-year terms by the Assembly, may eventually become the most important of the functional agents responsible for the positive elements of peace. It will seek "to encourage international co-operation for removal of economic and social causes of war and to improve the opportunities of mankind to enjoy full employment and high living standards." Canada has been especially concerned in the development of this Council for in this functional area her position as a food producer and trading nation will give her greater prestige than she might expect to attain as a small producer of security on the Security Council. Although limited to purely supervisory and advisory functions, it is to be hoped that this Council, together with the agencies as yet to be erected under it, will provide the basis for co-operation and understanding so vital to the success of the United Nations organization.

The problem of trusteeships ("mandates" appears archaic now) produced one of the most heated controversies at the conference. This controversy, at time of writing, still remains unsettled. However, it seems clear that a separation is to be made between "strategic" zones required by the Big Powers for defence, and colonies which may eventually mature to statehood. The controversy rages over the question of who shall have the right to define "strategic" areas: Russia wants the Council to decide; Great Britain and the United States want to decide for themselves. A further problem concerns the other colonial areas and the objectives towards which they should be permitted to strive: Russia insists on the goal of "independence" while Britain stands fast on the weaker term "self-government." The possible exclusion of so-called "strategic" areas from the jurisdiction of the international trustee authority may screen the imperialist aims of Britain and the United States and for that reason it might be advisable to adopt the Russian proposal to allow the Security Council to define such areas. With respect to the objectives of the trustee authority, it would appear that a refusal to write in the ultimate goal of independence might lead to the suspicion that the high ideals expressed in the preamble of the Charter are luxuries to which colonial peoples may never aspire.

In the final analysis the success of all these agencies in providing the positive bases for peace will depend on the type of administrative machinery devised. Canada has stressed the desirability of creating a genuine international civil service, but from all appearances we are likely to fall back on the example of the League Secretariat. The Big Powers have insisted that the Secretary-General and his deputies be chosen on their initiative. Moreover, five rather than four (as originally proposed) deputies are to be selected, which seems to imply that they will be nationals of the five

permanent members of the Security Council. If we start out with this bias in favour of representing each important state we return to one of the fundamental weaknesses of the League Secretariat. The administrative heads will be unable to sink their national identity and interests into a new loyalty to the United Nations but will become political heads of departments owing primary allegiance to their home country. In turn, this nationalist bias will undoubtedly have repercussions on the lesser personnel, and will prevent, as in the case of the League, the development of a truly international civil service possessing an *esprit de corps* which would override any narrow national interests.

The major difficulty here is that, unlike civil servants who are responsible through their political heads to some definite governmental organization, civil servants in an international bureaucracy owe their allegiance to a shadowy international governing body with much less authority than that of the member states. The principle of ministerial responsibility is difficult to obtain under such circumstances, and the chances are, as League experience reveals, that the higher administrators will not possess the impartiality of their brethren in state services, but will be more like lesser diplomats. Yet lacking some sort of *esprit de corps*, an international bureaucracy can hardly be expected to take action on its own initiative, but to wait for a vigorous push from one or more of the member states who have sufficient interest in a matter to demand action.

(3) *Canada and the Middle-Power Problem.* The concept of a Middle Power is new to the sphere of international politics and yet the claims made in its name caused more debate at San Francisco than any other issue. Mr. King was the first to popularize the idea, and now six countries lay claim to the dignity of Middle-Power status. The view that power and responsibility should go hand in hand or, in other words, that power should be granted in proportion to the functional importance and contribution of each nation, found its first practical expression at the UNRRA Conference where Canada, as a great food producer, was given a prominent place.

It seems clear that when Mr. King first formulated the doctrine he had in mind mainly economic and non-military functions. However, at San Francisco, H. V. Evatt of Australia became the most vociferous supporter of the view that the Middle Powers were important "security powers" and that they should, therefore, be given authority commensurate with their functional importance in the military as well as the non-military sphere. On these grounds a demand was made for a block of seats on the Security Council which should be permanently allocated to the Middle Powers. The Big Three, however, as chief producers (an estimated ninety per cent) of world security refused to destroy their monopoly position.

Canada eventually provided the formula which resolved the dispute. According to this proposal, any state which is required to contribute to the production of security cannot be forced to act unless it has had an oppor-

tunity to participate by debating and voting with the Security Council. The principle, "no taxation without representation," has been hailed as a hard-won victory for the Middle Powers.

On grounds of improved status and protection of sovereignty, this concession of the Big Powers to the Middle Powers is welcome. But any realistic appraisal of the concession, it is suggested, reveals that Canada has added very few inches to her present international stature.

In the first place, the only likely instance in which Canada might be called on for armed support (given the prominence of regional settlement of disputes) would be in the event of a conflict (which God and our new Security Council forbid!) between the western democracies and Russia. Canada's vote on the Security Council in this instance would be meaningless, for it is likely that she would be the first to bear the brunt of war.

However, the concession is really more important in its relation to non-military (especially economic) sanctions. Here sanctions by Canada as a trading nation and food producer would be more effective than her contributions to military sanctions. From this standpoint it is important that Canada be permitted to express her opinion on the Security Council. But mere privilege of voting is not enough to safeguard Canada's position since, as a Middle Power, it would have no veto over the decision of the Big Five: she can be forced by majority vote to take action against her wishes.

Canada could have protected her economic position far better by insisting on the expansion of a vague but extremely significant clause in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. In Chapter VIII, Section B, the suggestion was made that any country confronted with special economic problems arising from the imposition of sanctions had the right to consult the Security Council in regard to a solution of such problems. At San Francisco this suggestion appears to have roused no interest; and yet, without some method of distributing the losses incurred by the application of sanctions throughout the whole community of nations, the trading countries best fitted to make sanctions effective will refuse to employ them.

The interesting suggestion of the late Dean of the Law School at Northwestern University provides one logical approach to this problem of sanctions. He recommended an international insurance fund, raised possibly by a small tax on exports from each country, from which, when economic sanctions had to be applied, compensation for trade losses might be paid.

From one other viewpoint the concession to the Middle Powers appears dubious. The provision for giving any country which may be involved in providing sanctions a vote on the Security Council may, as in the case of the League, leave an "out" for nations reluctant to take action against the wishes of an isolationist home-opinion. It is true that Canada could not evade the enforcement provisions if a vote on the Council were carried against her wishes with the full support of the Big Five. However, Mr. King's insistence on the voting concession suggests that what he had in mind was a method by which responsibility for making international com-

mitments might be transferred to the Security Council rather than placed on the home government. It might be argued, from this viewpoint, that if a vote recommending action were taken by the Security Council against Canada's wishes, the Canadian government could absolve itself of all responsibility for requiring armed forces (for example) from a reluctant French Canada. It is actually impossible, however, for a nation to shift responsibility on to the Security Council, for it is the government of that nation not the Security Council which must face the electorate.

We should not forget that Canada took the lead in extracting the teeth from the League sanctions. Interpretation of Article XVI (the sanctions clause) in effect allowed the Council to propose, but left each nation to dispose. A second world war has done much to convince us that Senator Dandurand's "fire-proof house" in this modern world may go up in flames as quickly as a Balkan country; and yet a large element of our population abhors the thought of committing Canada to the support of the still undefined policing activities of a world authority. Our ambiguous position between Great Britain and the United States, our lingering colonialism expressed in a lack of self-confidence in developing an independent foreign policy, the rise of socialist parties which stress domestic affairs above foreign affairs, and, most important of all, the cleavage between parochial French Canada and imperialist English Canada, all combine to prevent our country from taking the leading part in world affairs which one should expect. We insisted at San Francisco on pressing for Middle-Power status when, at home, public opinion is in such a state that it will be reluctant to assume even Small-Power obligations. The argument for votes and status is meaningless unless we are prepared to assume the obligations that go with them. So long as foreign policy is foreign to Canadians there is little chance of building up an enlightened public opinion which alone can provide the basis for a long and prosperous life for the new world-order born at San Francisco.

REVIEWS

THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE[1]

GILBERT BAGNANI

This is a remarkable work. It is remarkable not only for having been written in Canada and published in England at such a time as this, but also for the temper which it exhibits. The author informs us that some of the pages were actually written under canvas; they might just as well have been composed in some remote monastery. Those who know Professor Salmon's extensive knowledge of modern international politics would naturally expect to find, in a work dealing with the rise of the greatest experiment in totalitarianism, many an illuminating or infuriating parallel with contemporary events. Except for a passing reference to Simon Legree, and a very timely warning that parallels between Roman and English judge-made law are profoundly misleading, the modern world might not exist. That this austerity is deliberate is evident from the number of happy apophthegms that are scattered through the volume, though in every case the contemporary application is left to the reader's intelligence. "Octavian was represented, not as the party leader (*dux*) who had managed to snatch victory for his own clique, but as the man who had saved the civilization of the west." "The civil law functioned, and to the inhabitants of Italy this has always been a matter of prime concern. They have always shown a disposition to believe not so much in any abstract theory of government as in a system that works, and the Augustan system did work." This last extract is worth most of the books written to explain Italian Fascism.

The author's austerity is equalled by his caution. He gives the reader the facts. Any inference, however probable, any hypothesis, however certain, is qualified by some adjective or adverb. In his preface he describes his work as "a reasonably up-to-date synthesis"; in his brief but excellent summary of the sources he says that Tacitus's "picture of the Principate is not altogether free from prejudice." Both adverbs might be omitted. A careful inspection, however, reveals that he accepts as an undoubted fact the poisoning of Claudius by Agrippina, and provides her with an ingenious and plausible motive. Yet the death, however opportune, of an unhealthy old gentleman of sixty-three may be due to natural causes, and the contemporary *Ludus de morte* does not even hint at poison. *Quod Agrippina voluit et potuit* does not necessarily prove *quod fecit.*

His general attitude is conservative. He deals adequately with the economic aspects, but not, as is now the fashion, to the virtual exclusion of the political, administrative, and military ones. He does no more than justice to Tiberius and Claudius, perhaps a little less than justice to Do-

[1] *A History of the Roman World from 30 B.C. to A.D. 138.* By EDWARD T. SALMON (Professor of Ancient History, McMaster University, Hamilton). London: Methuen and Co. [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders]. 1944. Pp. xiii, 363. ($6.50)

mitian, and, as to the other emperors, he accepts with qualifications the traditional verdicts. This caution of judgement is nowhere more in evidence than in the three chapters on the literature of the period, the least satisfactory in the book. They leave one with the impression—no doubt erroneous—that the only author he admires without reserve is Petronius, "one of the great names in literature." He is a little less guarded in his dislikes, usually expressed by some pungent epithet. "Genial but obstreperous" as applied to Germanicus the Elder is singularly happy, and "rogue" leaves one with little more to say about Josephus. But I venture to suggest that Pilate's long tenure of office was probably due to his somewhat sardonic sense of humour, indispensable for any prolonged residence in the Near East.

This coldness of temper which in happier times might be considered a blemish, is, at a time of slipshod thinking, a positive virtue. There are too many text-books that treat the Peloponnesian War as a struggle between "Democracy" and "Hitlerism": too many people, some of whom should know better, illustrate their conception of the modern Germans by quotations from Tacitus. No politician or journalist will cull from this work arguments with which to impress the public; on the other hand, the serious student will be able to rely with confidence on the facts, while the excellent bibliography will allow him to check any theory advanced.

Much space is devoted, as usual, to the constitutional development, the importance of which is probably exaggerated by our sources. The author's thesis is that the imperial power was based on the *imperium proconsulare* with which he believes Octavian was invested in 27 B.C. The lack of direct evidence, quite frankly admitted, is explained by a "conspiracy of silence" fostered by Octavian himself to disguise the military character of his rule. The fact is probable enough in itself: it is difficult to see how Octavian governed between 27 and 23 B.C. in virtue of his consular *imperium* alone; but is it very important? The real difficulty with which Pompey, Caesar, and Octavian were successively confronted was how to combine provincial and municipal power, how to rule the provinces and at the same time rule Rome itself. Pompey, at the head of a considerable military force and with a nebulously extensive authority over the provinces, discovered that in Rome itself a handful of gangsters could paralyse the government, injure his dignity, and even endanger his life. Caesar simply treated the constitution as a scrap of paper. The illegal feature of Octavian's rule between 27 and 23 was not his *imperium* over the provinces—Pompey had been invested with equally extensive powers—, but his yearly consulships. The grant of the *tribunicia potestas* did away with this necessity and rightly marks the beginning of what we may call the constitutional monarchy.

Holding this view of the origin of the imperial power, the author is inclined to exaggerate the importance of the army during the early Empire, even though he does not fall into the error of considering the Roman emperors as mere military dictators. In the period dealt with there were eleven emperors—if we exclude the three of A.D. 69 who were not recognized

ubique et ab omnibus. Of these eleven only four, Tiberius, Vespasian, Titus, and Trajan, were in any sense of the word soldiers, and Tiberius, though an exceptionally able general, had an incurably civilian mind. Octavian himself had nothing in common with Cromwell or Napoleon. In 44 B.C. he found himself heir to the leadership of a political party, to a very large amount of cash and to almost unlimited financial prospects. It was this cash in *esse* and in *posse*, not his magnetism or his family, that procured him an army. His military successes were due to Agrippa; he himself seems to have been a mediocre, not to say an incompetent, commander. Though it is true that the imperial power rested ultimately on the army, the loyalty of the army was secured by prompt pay and liberal donatives. *Point d'argent, point de légionnaire*. It would be therefore truer to say that the imperial power rested on the control of finance, as in all civilized states. That Octavian realized this is shown by his Egyptian policy. As long as he held Egypt securely he could count on the loyalty of the legions and the support of the Roman mob. Vespasian's first thought was to secure Egypt. The distrust of the army for the Claudians was caused not by loyalty to the blood of Julius but by the not unfounded suspicion that Tiberius and Claudius might want to reduce the army estimates.

The view that the principate was a diarchy is rightly rejected, but it does not follow that the settlement of 23 B.C. was an elaborate farce. Augustus may have been aiming quite honestly at a kind of constitutional monarchy, with the senate as a consultative, administrative, legislative, and checking body. It is obvious to us that such a scheme could not work, but Augustus lacked our experience. His attitude towards grants of Roman citizenship confirms this view. Caesar, who was aiming at an undisguised autocracy, was quite willing to grant it more or less to all applicants, since it would not carry with it any political power. Augustus, with "constitutional government" in mind, was less liberal, since in his projected scheme Roman citizens might still play a political part. The final extension of Roman citizenship was made when its privileges had become purely legal.

Surprise is expressed at the continued opposition of the senate "despite its changing personnel." As the author admirably points out, the imperial senate was composed of High Officials, active, retired, and unemployed. Everywhere and at all times High Officials are, as a body, extremely conservative, very touchy, and supremely confident that they could govern the country much better than the executive. Even without the memory of its former executive power, the senate was almost inevitably bound to come in conflict with the emperor. The fascist Italian senate, a body recruited in much the same way, also behaved under Mussolini as "a subservient but malevolent rubber stamp."

The development of Roman law is traced in some excellent sections. Its immense importance is admirably emphasized. It is, after all, the greatest contribution of Rome to civilization, and was one of the most important forces that held the Empire together. "As long as Roman Law

was cultivated in the Empire, and administered under proper control in the provinces, the invaders of the Byzantine territory were everywhere unsuccessful."[2]

Equally clear and important are the sections devoted to the administration and to the growth of the bureaucracy. The author views the latter with considerable suspicion, and closes his work with the statement that eventually its "red tape stretched its tentacles into the farthest corners of the Empire, throttled initiative and finally squeezed out its very life's blood." This is of course to a certain extent quite true, but our present consciousness of the evils of bureaucratic government should not blind us to its advantages. It was the high standard of administrative efficiency by means of a highly trained civil service that preserved, even under an inefficient or tyrannous executive, such anomalous and unreasonable institutions as the Roman empire, the Hapsburg monarchy, and the Venetian republic. After all, the Roman empire survived for fifteen centuries, and its Decline and Fall really begins when the Comneni deliberately destroyed the great bureaucratic machine that had been founded by Augustus and developed by Claudius and Hadrian.

LOG OF THE R.C.A.F.* EDGAR MCINNIS

The struggle in the air over western Europe and the Atlantic is one of the great epics of this war. The story of how Allied inferiority in 1939 was transformed into our crushing superiority in 1944 is here, even more than in other fields, far more than the story of battles. It is the story of the laboratories and the drafting-boards and the factories, of training-fields in Canada and transport-bases scattered from Greenland to West Africa, of heroism in the air made possible by the skill and devotion of men and women on the ground. It is a story of the evolution of strategy and tactics to keep pace with the expansion of resources, of the application of electronics to revolutionize the technique of both defence and attack, of the integration of the efforts of many nations under the auspices of the R.A.F. and the integration of that body's own efforts with those of the American air force to complete the rounded pattern of the final air offensive.

In this story Canada has an honourable place. The expansion of her air strength, from a handful of fliers equipped with obsolete machines to an organization embracing over 200,000 personnel, is not the least striking aspect of her war-effort. Her part in the Commonwealth Air Training Plan is a story in itself, and one which has a real bearing on the wider story of the war effort of the British nations and their contribution to a general Allied victory.

[2]George Finlay, *A History of Greece* (ed. Tozer, 1877), II, 24.

*_The R.C.A.F. Overseas: The First Four Years._ Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1944. Pp. xv, 376. ($3.00)

The record of the R.C.A.F. embraces a wide variety of factors and aspects. This book makes no attempt at a comprehensive story covering them all. It concentrates on the single theme of Canada's airmen in action. In a sense it is a log of the combat activities of the R.C.A.F. from the formation of its first squadron to the invasion of Italy in the autumn of 1943. It is an account which does full justice not only to the courage and skill of the men whose deeds it recounts, but also to the wide variety of activities in which they were called upon to engage. It will undoubtedly be of very great interest to the actual participants as well as to their intimates at home.

If on the other hand the average lay reader finds the narrative less vivid and exciting than he might expect, that is at least partly owing to its nature and limitations. In concentrating on their chosen theme, the authors have deliberately avoided any attempt to sketch the broader picture of which it is a part. Yet the two things are extremely hard to separate. The R.C.A.F. was allotted no special and distinctive role in the air warfare. It was an integral part of a larger force whose activities were co-ordinated on the basis of an over-all plan; and without a full treatment of this wider background, the story of the Canadian place in it inevitably lacks its full significance.

The dramatic values of the story, in fact, can only be realized if it is related to a broad coherent pattern. There are various patterns which might be chosen. Several of the chapters on such themes as fighter operations, the bombing offensive, the battle of the Atlantic, indicate topics where Canadian activities could be related to the larger picture. Or there is the whole story of the policy behind the R.C.A.F. and the task of working it out in practice, involving the tremendous effort of expansion, and the significance of the decision to set up a separate force. Or there is the story of the creation of the R.C.A.F. as an organization—its growing personnel, its advance in equipment, the steady expansion of its activities—the development in fact of a picture which would show the combat fliers as the spearhead of the vast and potent organization upon which the whole military force depended.

These however are topics which are only briefly referred to in the course of this book. It is implied that they will be dealt with separately, and the present volume will thus fit into a wider series which will ultimately present the whole picture. In the meantime, however, the present narrative suffers from the resulting limitations. Among other things, it is almost inevitably episodic. The basic plot is missing; and while the stories of individual operations have their own value, it is seldom that one gets a feeling that there is behind them a steadily evolving design which gives them their real meaning.

On the other hand, a survey of this scope gives little chance to develop the full value of individual stories. When the tales of various squadrons are told, as they will be eventually, they promise high dramatic value. The brief sketch of the Demon Squadron included in this book gives an indi-

cation of what may be expected from a larger narrative on this scale. It will offer opportunities not merely for fuller accounts of battle-operations, but for an appreciation of the emotional element involved in the personal relationships within the squadron and the personal fortunes of its members. Little of that can be brought out effectively in so broad a survey as the one under review. The writers have endeavoured to supply the personal touch by numerous references to individual fliers. These will be of keen interest to readers who know the men involved. For others, however, the names will have little meaning without the background which is necessary to invest them with a personality that would make their mention of interest and significance, and give to their triumphs and tragedies an emotional significance even to the reader who had no personal aquaintance with them.

This is also to some extent true of the accounts of individual actions in which the book abounds. It is undoubtedly sound in principle to tell such stories wherever possible in the words of the men involved. Yet here again it is somewhat surprising to find how uneven is the effectiveness of this method in practice. Perhaps the most unexpected feature is the comparatively undramatic quality of the accounts of fighter engagements. These are episodes which are swift and brief, and in which there is little basic variation. The man who has been engaged in them will read his own experiences and emotions into the clipped phrases of the pilots' reports. But to the layman these reports, admirable in their stark simplicity, will only imperfectly convey the tension of an encounter which may last only a minute or two, in which the enemy suddenly drops out of the sun and almost as suddenly is gone, in which it is a triumph to hold him in your sights long enough for a 12-second burst, and in which life and death hang on the precision of split-second timing. It is significant that one of the most gripping episodes has nothing whatever to do with enemy action, but is the story of an eight-hour battle with the elements by a Coastal Command plane on patrol north of the Shetlands.

These comments are made in no carping or critical spirit. They are simply an attempt to discover why a book whose theme is of the most absorbing interest should in fact fall below one's initial expectations. It is the result of difficulties inherent in the plan of the volume, and primarily in the type of selection which it has forced upon the authors. The story which they recount is one which eminently deserves to be told. But it can only be fully appreciated in relation to other parts of the story which they were obliged at the time to defer; and it is to the complete and rounded narrative that we must look for a true picture of Canada's effort in the air.

RECREATION: BOOK COLLECTING[1]

N. J. ENDICOTT

Miss Fannie E. Ratchford's edition of these letters by a great but now notorious book-collector begins with a hundred-page introduction entitled "A Further Inquiry into the Guilt of Certain Nineteenth-Century Forgers." This, as she says, owes a "tremendous debt" to Carter and Pollard, *An Enquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets* (1934), and must, indeed, be read with it. Carter and Pollard convicted, though they did not name, Thomas J. Wise as the forger of some fifty "first editions" of the nineteenth century. The calculated understatement of their *Enquiry* was not caused by timidity or a fear of the law of libel. It was due to the authors' rigid determination to keep within the field of positive evidence, and this cumulatively made their book all the more dramatically effective. But Miss Ratchford, before she has proven anything, recklessly speaks of the "Wise-Forman-Gosse workshop" for "making-up" books, and soon develops this workshop into a "national scandal" of forgery.

The actual new evidence she presents, it seems to me, leaves Wise as a master-forger, and the bookseller and former clerk, Herbert Gorfin, as a not too scrupulous export channel. Sir Edmund Gosse comes out in all probability morally innocent but with his bibliographical reputation (such as it was) slightly damaged, and his reputation for anecdotal accuracy not much worse than that of others against whom might be urged initial deception fortified by vanity and the lapse of years. Buxton Forman, on the other hand, seems most certainly involved.

What, very briefly, is the evidence? In the case of Buxton Forman there is, first of all, the fact of his possession of thirty-two of the forgeries, plus eleven duplicates. There are also a number of possibly suspicious elements in his literary connection with Wise. There is Miss Ratchford's mistaken and misleading argument that he would certainly have recognized minute characteristics of a particular font of type. But the crucial document, exasperatingly for her, remains seen but not usable in the library of an American book-collector. As Mr. Carter remarks in an important review article in the *Atlantic Monthly* (February, 1945): "Miss Ratchford cannot play the ace because Mr. Pforzheimer has it and has no more allowed her to use it than anyone else; but she knows it is there, and if she can only refer to it in a sad and tantalizing footnote, that freedom enables her to ruff and finesse with a freedom which she may be thought to have exercised too enthusiastically." Nevertheless the evidence seems to be there, and granting the simplicity and similarity of Wise's methods, guilt on one occasion suggests at least accessory guilt throughout.

Miss Ratchford's case against Sir Edmund Gosse begins, again, with his possession of twenty forgeries and his long bibliographical association

[1] *Letters of Thomas J. Wise to John Henry Wrenn: A Further Inquiry into the Guilt of Certain Nineteenth-Century Forgers.* Edited by FANNIE E. RATCHFORD. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1944. Pp. xiv, 590. ($7.50)

with Wise. It rests also on his contradictory accounts of the circumstances responsible for the (forged) 1847 *Sonnets* of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and on a single word in proof-correction. Miss Ratchford's arguments cannot here be discussed, but certain observations may be made.[2] In the first place Miss Ratchford assumes that Gosse was much more accurate than his work shows him to have been. Also she deduces too freely: on page 84, for instance, she states that he "did in all probability" see a certain book; on page 85 this becomes "it is incredible that he did not" see it; and this soon leads to "he made no effort to correct so momentous an error." The really striking discrepancies in his accounts of 1894 and 1927, on which I have already commented, she justifiably emphasizes, but allows only for guilty complicity. Finally there is the supposed proof-correction. The initial clue to this identification came from a handwriting picture deep in Miss Ratchford's unconscious memory. Her own judgment is corroborated, she says, by the opinions of a score or more anonymous friends accustomed to identifying handwriting. But she very honestly gives the reply of the only professional expert she consulted—to the effect that the evidence is insufficient and improper. Carter and Pollard see no likeness; neither, from the facsimile, does this reviewer.

But if the deeds and misdeeds of Gosse and Forman are the subject of much of the long introduction, the interest of the letters themselves centres on what might be called The Remarkable Case of Thomas J. Wise, whose character is far too intriguing to be contained in the simple pun of Wilfred Partington's book on him, *Forging Ahead*, and should rather inspire a psychological novel or a whole new chapter in Holbrook Jackson's entertaining and encyclopaedic *Anatomy of Bibliomania*.

Thomas Wise was born in 1859, and according to *Who's Who* of his time spent thirty-five years in business in the London Produce Market. At the age of twenty-three he made one excursion into creative literature with *Verses*, but two years later produced the first of the many limited and special books he was to edit. About 1888, with some experience in editing facsimiles for the Browning and Shelley Societies, he began to forge. This he continued up to the turn of the century, but he did not get rid of the remaining stocks of his forgeries until 1909-1910. In the meantime, he had begun to issue the authoritative bibliographies which he produced in such impressive numbers, building up at the same time the finest private library in England, and helping his much less learned Chicago friend, John Henry Wrenn, to make an almost equally great collection in America. By 1934, when retribution overtook him, Wise had become President of the Bibliographical Society, honorary M.A. of Oxford, and honorary fellow of Worcester College, as well as one of the best known bibliophiles and bibliographers in the world.

Again and again, in letters and criticism, Wise attacked forgery and

[2]See also further evidence in the *Atlantic* article cited above.

proclaimed that "easy as it appears to be to fabricate reprints of rare books it is in actual practise absolutely impossible to do so in such a manner that detection cannot follow the result." He was right. But though he was in his turn exposed, his alternative was none the less brilliant. It was, simply, not imitation but creation: the choice of a title from an already existing volume; printing this, in pamphlet form, in a small edition; planting it in well-known libraries, and building up its reputation and value. The masterly way in which Wise looked after his illegitimate children is very amusingly illustrated in these letters. We can, as Miss Ratchford suggests, imagine the gleam in his eye as he boasted to Wrenn of having got a copy well below the market price, of having bought one advantageously at an auction (to which he had anonymously submitted it), or when he wrote "We shall have more bargains before we are done." And what could be better comedy than his indignation when he found that someone had forged *his* forgery? What more natural than to offer to give (or sell!) a copy of the "genuine article" to the cheated book-lover? The amounts he made were relatively small, the prices at which he sold or procured good books for Wrenn (a very congenial friend) were well below market price. In all his dealings with Wrenn he received no commission. Had his books and those of Wrenn been sold at their deaths, the prices fetched would have been, Miss Ratchford says, five hundred per cent above the cost—and this for collections valued at hundreds of thousands of pounds. Yet while he was building up these monuments to his judgment, knowledge, energy, and shrewdness, he was also selling Wrenn all his forgeries and inventing fictitious sources for very desirable books passed on at reasonable prices.

The motives for all this are even more interesting than the facts. Why did he do it? At first, apparently, there was the need for money—to buy rare books—he being relatively poor at the time with £500 a year and a wife. There must also have been the desire to achieve rapidly a reputation as a rising bibliographer and book-collector in a world of education, and sometimes of wealth, to which he did not belong. There was an element of excitement allied to that when, on his regular expeditions, he discovered treasures in unexpected places. There was vanity and pride. In *Who's Who*, year after year, "Book collecting and the study of bibliography" was Wise's only entry after "Recreation." Recreation? But doubtless *most* men are better for a hobby.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS THAT CAME* — KENNETH MACLEAN

"Too hot for neutral topics," the successful editor of the *Tatler* turned his attention to Whig politics so successfully as to secure a seat in Parliament, a knighthood, and a lucrative patent for the Drury Lane Theatre.

**Tracts and Pamphlets by Richard Steele.* Edited with notes and commentary by RAE BLANCHARD. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1944. Pp. xvii, 663. ($5.50)

That Steele in entering politics should have remained the man of letters, is not surprising in an age when one pending piece of legislation might call up three new periodicals and a whole flight of pamphlets. Steele's political writings constitute the bulk of the tracts and pamphlets Miss Blanchard has here collected and edited. The briefest glance at these writings tells one that Steele is not among the great English political writers. These pamphlets are fragmentary in their composition, patchworks of quotation from legislation, speeches, petitions, letters, newspapers, and rival pamphlets. Too often they have the formlessness of the rebuttal. And their prose style, which was at one time regarded as simplicity itself compared with the elaborate prose of the seventeenth century, no longer sounds simple to us. This prose is definitely Ciceronian and rhetorical, depending for effect upon rhythm of balanced structures. It is the prose associated with Greek and Roman democracy, and accordingly flourished in England with the rise of parliamentary power in the eighteenth century. But however effective on the floor it is not good closet prose, and one feels that in just the matter of style, Steele's great opponents, Swift and Defoe, with their truly simple prose had much the advantage over him. If these political writings are somewhat poor in style, so are they in theme. They are not concerned with the principles of government, and for this want they can never stand beside the political writings of Milton, Locke, Burke, and Wordsworth. They deal rather with current legislation. And the wisdom and justice of his opinions on affairs-current depended, the somewhat puritanical Steele supposed, on how good and honest a man he was. "Sir, a good Name is as dear to me as it can be to the greatest Man in *England*" (p. 301). "Whoever reads the following Apology, will easily allow me, that I am much less concerned for the Fame of a Writer than that of an honest Man" (p. 279). Too many pages are just an amplification of such remarks. Of course Swift and Defoe, who had no political constituency and didn't have to behave in print, were constantly nettling him, this "mushroom patriot" who "pimp[s] in print." Steele saw himself continually as the persecuted public figure, and the impeachment which an opposition House brought against him in 1714 was really, he thought, just the grand summation of this campaign in personal abuse. In the midst of the mud-slinging, Steele behaved like one of the injured heroines of his own plays: he took the high ground and wailed. "I assert and declare . . . whoever talks with me is speaking to a Gentleman born" (p. 188). He would not stoop to their game, not anyway until the end when, quite out of the blue, he released against his old friend Addison probably the most vile insinuation to be circulated in this age of scurrilities. The constant personal moan in these pamphlets is a contribution to neo-classical lyric, but not to political writing.

But out of Steele's amateur pamphlets, however lacking they are in greatness, emerges with some vividness an image of the mind of the early eighteenth-century Whig. Perhaps more clearly than in Locke's great

second *Treatise*, many of us can see here the progressive mind of the eighteenth century. We see a consciousness beginning to make, in the new Roman manner, a fetish out of its devotion to country. "Sir, I always postpone my own private Safety to that of my Country" (p. 321). "But I thank God, my *Love* to the *Publick*, is above it: and I feel it true within, what the *Patriot*, and *Orator* of *Rome* said, *Omnes omnium charitates Patria una complexa est*" (p. 353). We see, too, a mind applying the framework of contemporary optimism to the glorious revolution of 1688 which introduced "the *Best* of *Princes*, and the *Best* of *Constitutions*." We see a consciousness puritanically opposed to church authority, be it either Anglican or papal: "... *all Exorbitant Power in Clergymen was Popery*" (p. 352). Many of Steele's pamphlets are attacks upon political Catholicism. We see further and principally a practical mind concerned with the commercial and industrial development of Great Britain, demanding tariff protections from foreign competition and the defeat of rival mercantile powers. Steele's commercial mood prompts him to address himself to Marlborough and military heroes rather generally; it leads him to condemn the Treaty of Utrecht because it had not removed all possibility of France's dominating the trade of Europe; it makes him call ruthlessly in pamphlet after pamphlet for the immediate dismantling and destruction of the French port of Dunkirk, in accordance with the one good provision of that bad treaty. But while Steele and his Whigs were promoting a "bad-neighbour" foreign policy of tariff barriers and worse, they were beginning to declare for free trade within England itself (p. 449). We see, too, in other parts of this volume, a mind much interested in the progress of practical science. Oddly enough, Tory and Whig separated on the subject of science, the Whigs practising and the Tories ridiculing. In the Whig tradition, Steele came to the defence of a Greshamite friend when the Tory wits started sending this scientist letters "from the Facetious Dr. Andrew Tripe at Bath." In the Whig manner Steele himself experimented in invention, designing with great hope of profits a sloop with water-chambers in which fish could be brought alive from sea back to market. We catch a picture of Steele going down to the river to test the little model of his ship—a picture somehow so nicely suggestive of that child-like character of science which the early observers saw but which we have been made to forget. The Whig mind, a hard blend of Roman and puritan attitudes, was in all ways practical and utilitarian. It lacked such mystic sense as supported the Tory's faith in the divinity of kings and the superior authority of the Church. But the Whig mind was the new mind, and its winning doctrines swept boldly along through the century, with poets to praise them. The temper of the later eighteenth century, with its strong agrarian feeling and its ideal of international free trade (both illustrated in Adam Smith), checked somewhat the intentions of the earlier century, but not for long, and when we enter the nineteenth century, we know that what Steele hoped for has altogether happened.

The reader of Miss Blanchard's volume will, I am sure, think it was a happy idea to collect these scattered but related writings of Steele, most of which have not been republished since the eighteenth century. One might wish the volume included a general introductory essay, in addition to the six-page preface on textual problems. The separate introductions to the several pamphlets are useful in a factual way. Since Miss Blanchard's edition aims principally to provide the text, we should limit our criticism to questions of accuracy and the like. Unfortunately, one does detect misprints, such as "Qustion" (p. 15), "deafned" (p. 191; cf. p. 280), "Steeele" (p. 276), "indicaed" (p. 648), "Attainer, Act of" (p. 657). "Zeal" should be italicized on page 356. Such errors are perhaps not important, but they seem a little incongruous in texts which have been collated with as many as eight editions, and in a volume where the foot-notes are altogether concerned with word changes. One finds by further examination that there are some unexplained differences between the text of *The Christian Hero* as printed here, and the text in Miss Blanchard's separate edition of 1932 (see p. 27, note b, and p. 52, note b, of the earlier text, and compare). Incidentally, one wonders why Miss Blanchard chose to reprint this quite available tract. The only part of the volume spoiled by errors is the index which is full of mistakes (see entries for St. Peter, St. Paul, Spitalfields silk weavers, etc.). My impression is that on the whole this volume does not exhibit the high standards of scholarship Miss Blanchard has shown in her editing of *The Christian Hero* (1932) and of Steele's *Correspondence* (1941). Very likely the assistance a scholar needs and expects in work of this kind was not to be had in war-time.

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